



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

ANNUAL REPORT

Systemic Special Education Needs and Recommended Actions

2018-2019 School Year

Prepared for:
The LCPS School Board
November 2019

Executive Summary

SCHOOL BOARD ACTION ITEMS FOR 2019-2020

1. Transparency:
 - Require all policies, regulations, procedures and guidelines to be documented and published on the LCPS web site.
 - Develop policy to ensure students, families, and professionals are provided with data when requested
 - Develop policy for parent and professional school observations for all students
2. Examine staffing levels to identify the decrease in special education staff and supports.
 - Address the shortage of special education teachers, teaching assistants, and related service professionals
3. Require Title II of the ADA and Section 504 training for all staff
4. Review and reconsider Restraint and Seclusion Policy
 - Prohibit the use of Seclusion
 - Include measures and supports to prevent reoccurrence
 - Provide Trauma Training to all LCPS staff
 - Require Trauma Evaluations after the use of restraint or seclusion incidents
 - Require a Nurse to assess for injury after restraint or seclusion
5. Transition:
 - Create Training Centers for Independent Living and Pre-Employment Skills Training
 - Provide dedicated job coaches for high schools
6. Create a Budget Item for SEAC
 - Fund independent data science consultant for SEAC Annual Survey analysis
 - Request \$25,000
 - Speakers, SEAC Award Ceremony, training, and operating expenses
 - Request \$10,000

SPECIAL EDUCATION ACTION ITEMS FOR 2019-2020

1. Transparency:
 - a. Provide SEAC with requested information and data
2. IEP Implementation:
 - a. Review High School and Middle School service delivery efficacy
3. Transition:
 - a. Identify Assessment Tools for Independent Living and Pre-Employment Skills
 - b. Develop, publish, and utilize standardized transition forms for special education students when transitioning from pre-school to elementary, elementary to middle, and middle to high school.
4. Update LCPS IEP Program to be able to:
 - a. Document all related services on the services page of the IEP
 - b. Review FBA and BIP's to conform with VDOE Guidance
5. Develop a Quality Assurance Program
 - a. Measure implementation fidelity of methodologies (e.g., Ukeru, Specialized Reading)
 - b. Measure implementation fidelity of IEPs and 504 plans
 - c. Measure progress and outcomes, and access service efficacy

SEAC ANNUAL REPORT

Systemic Special Education Needs and Recommendations 2018-2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) works alongside parents, students, educators, staff and the school board to identify needs, suggest improvements, and advance the interests of students receiving special education services in Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) to help ensure that students with disabilities have access to and receive an appropriate, individualized and inclusive public education.

LCPS has so much to offer all students of all abilities. Overall, LCPS students are well-rounded, well-prepared and highly competitive in the college and job market. SEAC would like to ensure that all students have access to the same opportunities and benefits derived from obtaining an education in LCPS. With appropriate individualized accommodations, supports and services, students with disabilities can thrive alongside their general and gifted education peers and contribute to fulfilling the mission of LCPS to prepare ALL students to make meaningful contributions to the world.

It is important to recognize that students with differences provide opportunities for others to develop empathy and successfully interact within the richly diverse world in which we all live. Similarly, in an inclusive, accepting environment, all students are able to develop an appreciation for alternative ways of thinking and being, and that these approaches are equally valuable and essential for advancing society. The LCPS core belief that an inclusive, safe, caring and challenging learning environment is the foundation for student growth is exactly the kind of atmosphere in which students with disabilities best learn and succeed. We need to ensure that these core beliefs are continuously displayed in the attitudes and actions in the learning environment.

As a state-mandated advisory committee to the school board, SEAC exists to help the school division identify systemic areas of need in educating students with disabilities, and works diligently to provide thoughtful input into policies, procedures, and plans to improve and deliver high-quality special education in LCPS that complies with state and federal regulations. SEAC recognizes and appreciates LCPS's commitment to providing an excellent educational experience for students with disabilities and we look forward to enhancing trust and collaboration between the special education community and LCPS staff.

SEAC is grateful to the many parents who courageously provided public comment and who thoughtfully completed the annual SEAC parent survey, the membership of SEAC, PTA/PTO Representatives and LCPS staff. On behalf of SEAC, thank you for considering the issues and recommendations in this report.

THE ROLE OF SEAC AND VIRGINIA REGULATIONS

The Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia reflect the state and federal requirements for the provision of special education and related services. The regulations mandate that an active SEAC exists, as well as specific functions of the SEAC, as specified by Section 8VAC20-81-230 D.2, which are as follows:

1. Advise the local school division of needs in the education of students with disabilities;
2. Participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of students with disabilities;
3. Submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of students with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board;
4. Assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of students with disabilities for educational services;
5. Review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board; and
6. Participate in the review of the local school division's annual plan.

This annual report satisfies requirements 1, 2 and 3 above as set forth by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia.

THE PURPOSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

The purpose of special education is to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that prepares students for a secure and meaningful future as productive and independent citizens. For students with disabilities, access to a high-quality educational experience that includes academic, social and emotional learning, directly impacts their ability to develop skills, traits and acquire the knowledge needed for a successful life after high school based on their capabilities and aspirations. The supports and services provided in PreK-12 public education for students with disabilities are vitally important in creating a safe learning environment that provides a strong foundation of success and establishes a clear path for self-efficacy and life-long accomplishments.

SCOPE OF REPORT

This report identifies areas of need in the education of students with disabilities in LCPS and outlines recommendations for both the provision and ongoing improvement of special education and related services. SEAC strongly urges the school board, staff and others to review last year's (2017-2018) full report and the specific recommendations that were outlined to provide context for the information contained in this report.

This report primarily focuses on SEAC's observations and perspectives related to:

1. Commendations for progress made in areas of need and concern identified last year.
2. Issues that continue to be of concern.
3. New and additional areas of need that pertain to issues originally identified last year and in prior years.
4. Recommendations to address needs and concerns that SEAC deems as priorities.

In past reports, as well as for this year's report, SEAC attempted to obtain progress updates from staff for all recommendations from the immediate past year, as well as issues that have spanned several years. *Please see the Appendix to review an outline of last year's recommendations with updates from the Office of Special Education in response to those recommendations.*

As expressed in last year's report, it is beyond the scope and capacity of the volunteers who serve SEAC to comprehensively track and follow-up with systematic updates on all of the cumulative issues that have been identified, along with the many proposed solutions and requests in past reports that were carefully prepared. These past issues and recommendations still stand, even if they have remained unaddressed or only partially addressed. They were originally included because they were deemed by SEAC to be important systemic needs and actionable recommendations that would address the needs of our community.

Importantly, it should be noted that for SEAC to fulfill its responsibilities in advising the School Board on the needs of students receiving special education services in LCPS, it is important for SEAC to have access to LCPS data, reports and information to more comprehensively formulate and justify the issues and recommendations contained in this report. SEAC requested specific data on restraint and seclusion, as well as disciplinary actions pertaining to students with disabilities for the 2018-2019 school year, but incomplete, insufficient or no data was provided. Therefore, some issues and

recommendations could be more clearly portrayed if SEAC had access to the data requested.

As stated last year, *SEAC strongly urges the school board to institute a process whereby SEAC's reports are further deliberated and issues are delegated to the appropriate parties within LCPS for follow-up and regular reporting on outcomes **throughout** the school year to the School Board and in conjunction with SEAC.* SEAC members devote a considerable amount of time and thought to the work of advising the school board. We, respectfully ask, for each member of the school board and division leadership to fully review and consider our reports and input, and to engage SEAC through open, transparent, inclusive communication.

OVERVIEW

COMMENDATIONS

Providing proper supports, services, and opportunities for special education students, and actively involving them in all aspects of the LCPS curriculum and school setting prepares every LCPS student with the strong foundation they deserve to be self-sufficient within their capabilities, a good citizen, and a contributing member of society.

Last year was a time of transition and change in the Department of Pupil Services and the Office of Special Education. Dr. Asia Jones, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services began her first year in the role and Dr. Patricia Nelson was hired and began July 1 to serve as the Director of Special Education. SEAC is optimistic that these new leaders will cultivate the transparency, open communication and collaboration the special education community desires and deserves.

SEAC is appreciative of School Board Chairman, Jeffrey Morse for his active monitoring of special education issues and for his wisdom in appointing School Board Member Chris Croll as the Board Liaison to SEAC. Mrs. Croll has regularly attended SEAC meetings, has communicated openly and consistently with SEAC, and has helped to bring SEAC's voice to School Board deliberations. SEAC is grateful for her support, advocacy, deep knowledge and compassion for the issues that students with disabilities face every day in the school environment.

SEAC commends LCPS for its inclusive mission and many of the division's guiding principles that specifically impact students with disabilities, as well as actions that were taken this year to improve the services and climate for students with disabilities. These actions include:

- 1. Establishing Unified Mental Health Teams in all High Schools and Middle Schools.**

All students, and especially students with disabilities, need to feel emotionally and physically safe, supported and accepted in the school environment before they can properly learn. Developing adaptive coping skills, strong self-esteem and appropriate expression of feelings provides a strong foundation for managing the challenges and stresses that occur in an inherently evaluative and competitive campus setting. Ensuring all students have access to expert mental health support is important for creating a healthy learning environment and attending to the needs of all learners.

2. Social Emotional Learning Curriculum.

Students with disabilities are especially susceptible to the negative consequences of not developing prosocial behaviors at the same pace of their non-disabled peers. Effective social skills, emotional regulation, personal insight and adaptive behaviors all contribute to academic success. SEAC is pleased with the School Board's attention to the value of social emotional learning by allocating funds to procure and implement the first stage of an integrated social emotional learning curriculum beginning in a subset of elementary schools. Moreover, the effectiveness of social emotional learning is contingent upon integrating the philosophy, language and activities throughout the school day to facilitate generalization of skills across settings.

3. Revision of Restraint and Seclusion Policies.

Creating stronger policies that seek to clarify the proper use of restraint and seclusion is a good first step towards eliminating the use of these traumatic and often inappropriately used practices in LCPS. SEAC acknowledges efforts to train staff in appropriate de-escalation techniques to prevent the need for restraint and seclusion, as well as introduce the use of Ukeru as a less restrictive alternative as the division moves towards complying with new state laws that restrict the use of restraint and seclusion in the Commonwealth's public schools.

4. Parent Resource Services (PRS) and PRS Programming

SEAC appreciates the careful planning that PRS has engaged in to offer programs that address the most pressing concerns and informational needs of parents. SEAC shares programming ideas and needs with PRS staff who use their resources to develop timely community education opportunities. PRS also directs distraught parents seeking information to the right resources within LCPS and the community to help answer their questions and provide assistance.

5. Funding for Middle and High School Arts Programs

The performing arts serve as a quintessential human equalizer. Arts programs in LCPS create an opportunity for every participant's talents to be identified, utilized, affirmed, magnified and showcased among peers, educators, staff and the community. In particular, this platform helps students with disabilities feel important, valued, included, successful and recognized for what they can do well, rather than their challenges. The important skills students learn through this process are highly generalizable to the regular academic environment and contribute to significant accomplishments beyond the stage.

DATA SOURCES

SEAC uses multiple data sources throughout the year to identify areas of need for students receiving special education services. These include:

1. Formal public comment presented at SEAC meetings
2. SEAC subcommittee work, deliberations and reports
3. Discussions, comments, and information shared at SEAC meetings
4. Discussions, comments, and information shared during SEAC-hosted presentations
5. Information shared with SEAC officers and members by PTA/PTO Representatives
6. Parent outreach directly to SEAC
7. Informational meetings with staff
8. The annual SEAC Parent Survey

ANNUAL SURVEY PROCESS AND REQUEST

SEAC is very pleased with the response rate of this year's (2018-2019) annual parent survey and the detailed comments parents shared. The response rate increased dramatically from approximately 115 in 2017, 568 in 2018 and to 822 this year. The content was updated and expanded last year and remained virtually the same this year, in 2019, to facilitate multi-year comparisons as SEAC continued to solicit input from the special education community. The only changes made between the 2018 and 2019 versions of SEAC's annual parent survey were to clarify terminology and refine sequencing and formatting. Such changes are noted herein.

The 2018 and updated 2019 survey was developed by the SEAC Immediate Past Chair and Executive Committee Member, Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson and SEAC's former Vice Chair of Communications and current member, Dr. Amy Elledge, both of whom have a background in research methodologies, survey development, and social science data analysis.

The quantitative data analysis was completed by Dr. Elledge and reviewed by SEAC's Executive Committee. The in-depth qualitative analysis of the short answer responses was completed in stages by different subsets of the survey authors and SEAC's executive committee, with a final review by the full executive committee and membership. This analysis was not accomplished with a qualitative data analysis or statistical program, but it is still deemed to be a reliable interpretation of the data, due to interrater comparisons and in-depth discussions to reveal consensus.

As stated last year, **SEAC requests that the School Board allocate funding to engage an independent research firm to help SEAC develop, implement and analyze the SEAC Annual**

Parent Survey, beginning in Spring 2020. A survey designed and analyzed by an independent expert will yield more reliable and generalizable results, as well as lessen the demand on SEAC volunteers to conduct a survey of this magnitude. **The current model is not sustainable.** As the SEAC leadership and membership changes over time, SEAC member expertise and experience in conducting research may not be available from the volunteers. To maintain the credibility and trustworthiness of the survey results as perceived by the broader special education community, SEAC discourages the School Board from delegating the construction, administration, analysis and presentation of results to LCPS staff members.

PRIMARY AREAS OF NEED AND CONCERN (2018-2019)

Results from this year's (2019) survey support continued emphasis in the same overall areas of focus that were identified last year (2018) and are as follows (not in a prioritized order):

1. Policies, Practices and Procedures

One of SEAC's mandated roles per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (#5) is to *"review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board."* Historically, SEAC has not been provided with the opportunity to either proactively or retroactively review any proposed or ongoing special education policies or practices until recently (September 2018). This past year, SEAC established a policy committee tasked with developing a workflow with the Office of Special Education to receive, review and discuss relevant policies, present information and recommendations to the SEAC membership to vote on SEAC's input to such policies, and then present SEAC's position to the division staff and School Board.

Given that policy/practice review is a core function of SEAC, SEAC has worked diligently over the past year to be properly included in the workflow for all relevant reviews and given the opportunity and time for due diligence in formulating input on behalf of SEAC. Such a workflow remains in development and SEAC strongly urges continued refinement of a process that is responsive to the timelines of the staff and School Board, while respecting the role and availability of SEAC volunteers to perform its evaluation and craft thoughtful input.

2. Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness and integrative supports, appropriate use of reinforcement and discipline, organization and time management skills, self-advocacy coaching, developing strong work and study habits, and test preparation are consistently high areas of need within the special education population. While

SEAC applauds the steps taken this year to secure and begin implementing a social emotional learning curriculum in some elementary schools, the selected vendor's curriculum does not have approaches tailored to or adapted for students with disabilities, who are often in most need of this type of direct instruction. Likewise, social emotional learning (SEL) should be expanded to all elementary, middle and high schools. Starting SEL in elementary school provides a good foundation, but SEL happens progressively with increasingly more complex skills needed to navigate the more difficult situations that characterize the angst in middle school and need for acceptance and self-efficacy that extends into high school.

3. Specialized Programs and Services

Providing speech therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology, music therapy, career and transition services, twice exceptional programs, specialized reading instruction, and intensive autism and behavior programs are critical to the success of large cohorts of special education students. Concerns are consistently expressed and have grown in seriousness over the past year regarding the availability and access, frequency, regularity and fidelity in which these programs and services are delivered.

4. Culture and Climate

A pervasive concern relates to a lack of transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams to make decisions, and communication. Productive, collaborative relationships between LCPS and parents/students receiving special education students are essential for identifying, meeting and adapting to the changing needs of students with disabilities. This can only be accomplished when LCPS and parents/students work in partnership, acknowledge the shortcomings and mistakes made on both sides, and ensure the best interests of the student are prioritized.

5. Compliance

Issues related to compliance with the IEP, consistency across the school division, and the implementation of supports and services continue to impact the performance, inclusion and achievement of students with disabilities. Even if compliance is a common deficiency across all school divisions, it should not be accepted as the norm in LCPS.

SEAC 2019 ANNUAL SURVEY AND DATA SUMMARIES

The SEAC Annual Parent Survey was significantly revised in 2018 and the response rate increased considerably from the prior year (2018 N = 568, 2017 N = 110). The same survey tool was used for this year's 2019 survey to enable SEAC to compare changes from year to year using the same metrics and to provide a framework for recording longitudinal patterns. The 2019 survey had an unprecedented response rate with a sample size (N) of 822.

Demographic data was collected from respondents and a wide range of satisfaction questions were included using rating scales and short answer responses to assess parent input on the special education process, services and supports, as well as areas for improvement. Responses to the rating scales and the open-ended questions should be considered in context and as a whole. It can be misleading to ignore the framework by extracting individual sections as a representation of overall findings. It is similarly distorting to suggest that all ratings to the right and left of the scale should be consolidated into merely two categories representing either satisfied or not satisfied. This would be an inappropriate interpretation of the data and not consistent with or loyal to the intention of the ratings as they are presented.

In 2018-2019 there were approximately 9,500 students receiving special education services through LCPS. This is 11-12% of the entire LCPS student population, and under the national average for students receiving special education services.

The three largest groups of respondents identified their student with a primary disability of: Specific Learning Disability (25%), Autism (24%), and Other Health Impairment (17%).

As noted elsewhere in this report, every area of satisfaction decreased substantially from 2018 to 2019. The 2019 satisfaction tables are included below and can be compared to the 2018 tables included in the appendix.

Percentages of students' eligibility categories, as reported by parent/guardian, 2018-19

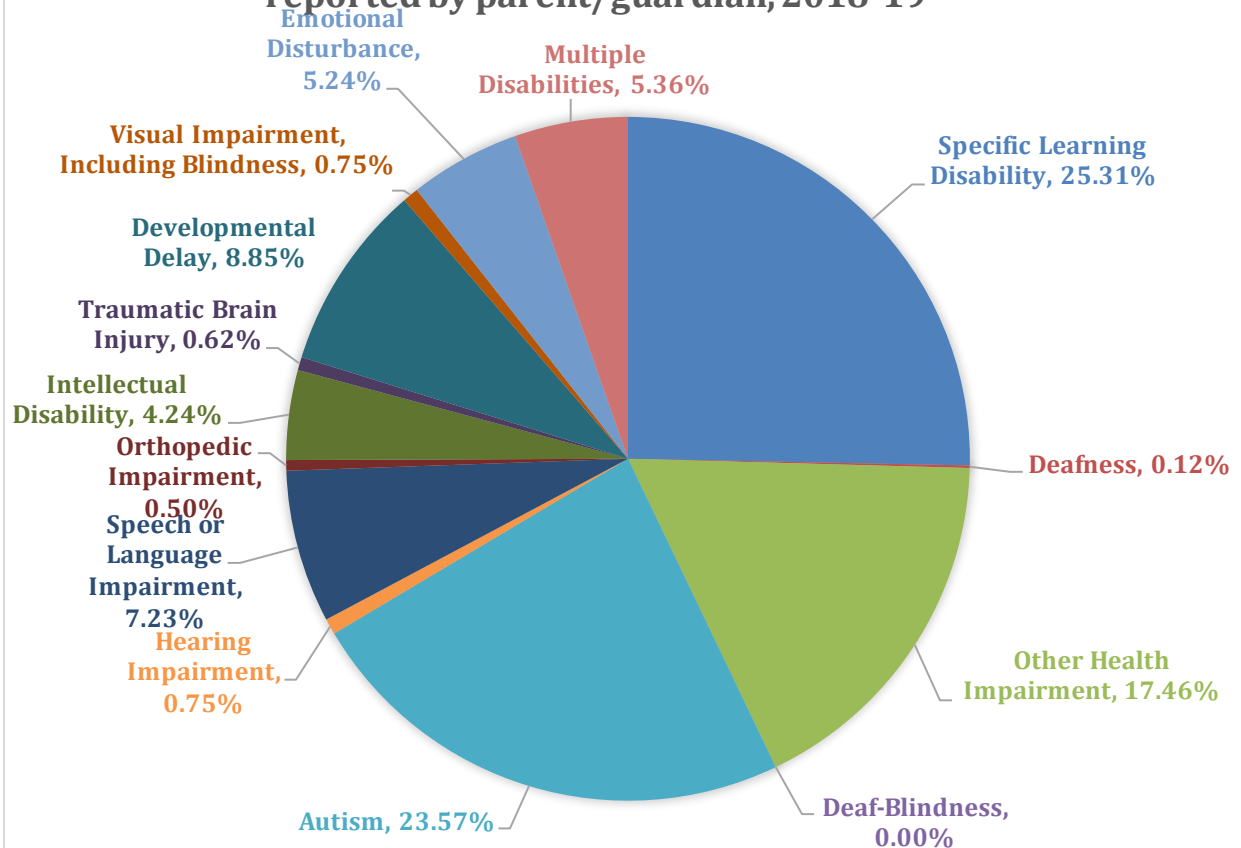


Table 1:

Survey Question: Based on your experience with your special education student, during the 2018-19 school year, how satisfied have you been with:

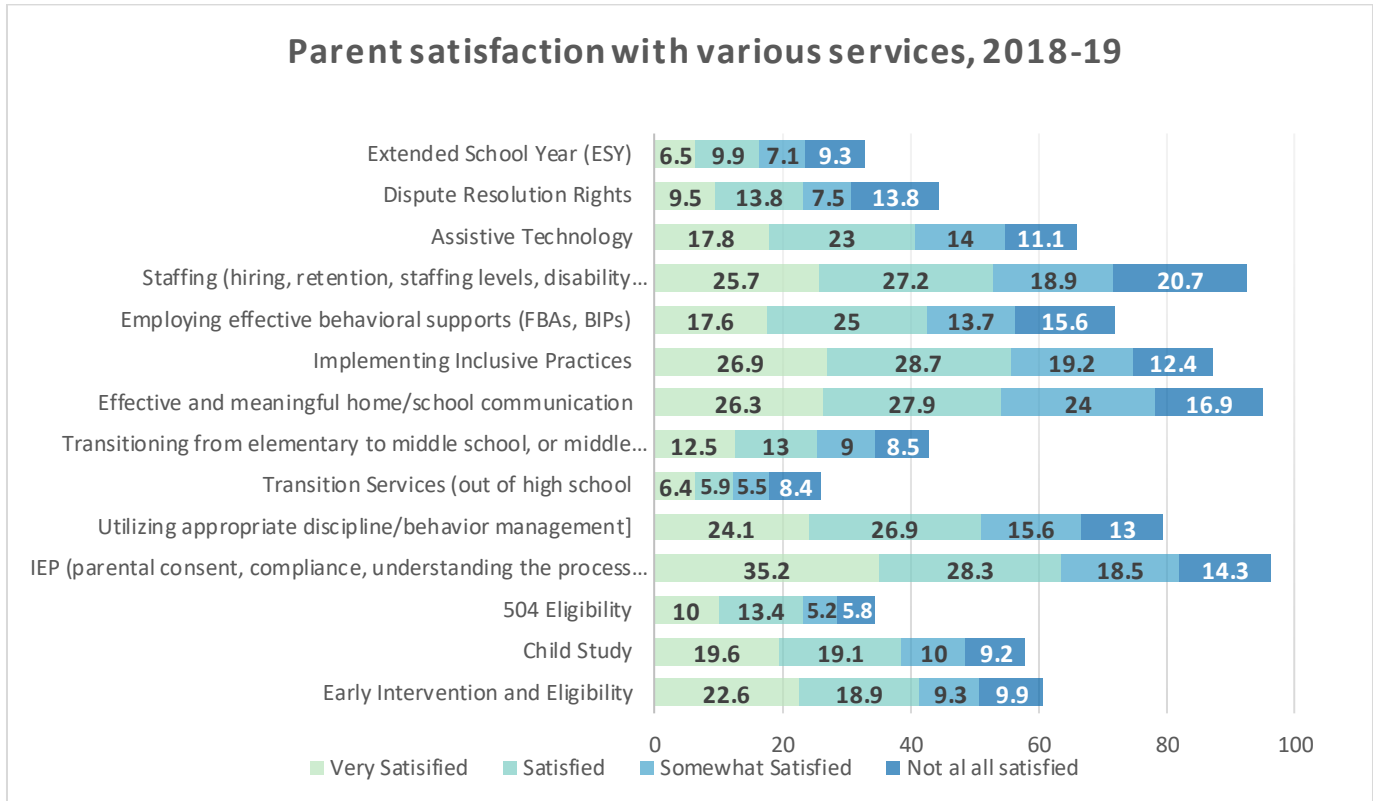


Exhibit reads: 6.5% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with Extended School Year (ESY) services they and/or their student received during the 2018-19 school year. Note: respondents were given the choice of N/A as a response – for those columns not totaling to 100% the remainder can be assumed to be N/A. These data were removed from the exhibit in order to preserve/increase readability.

Table 2 (Table 3 in last year's report)

Survey Question: During the 2018-19 school year, how satisfied have you been with the instruction your student has received in:

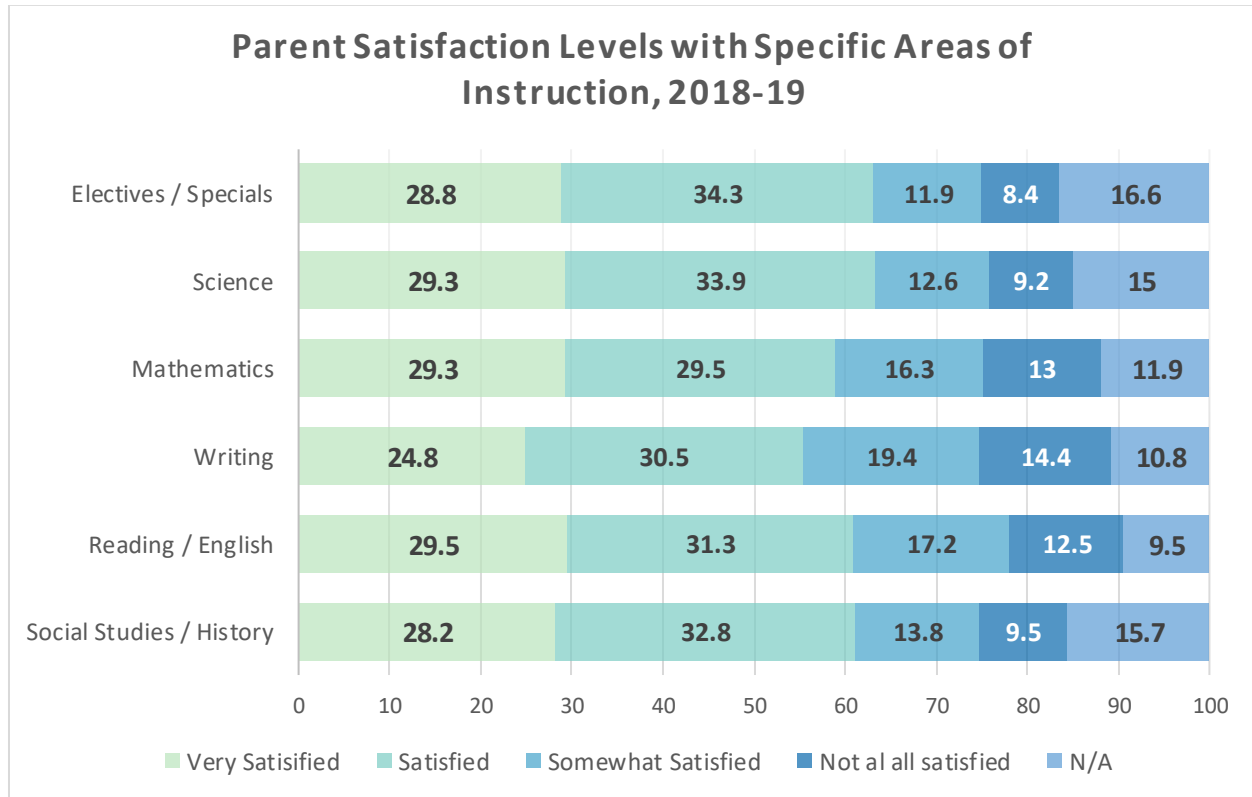


Exhibit reads: 28.8% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the instruction in Electives and/or Specials their student received during the 2018-19 school year.

Table 3:

Survey Question: My school keeps me informed and/or helps me have an active role in my child's education in the following ways.

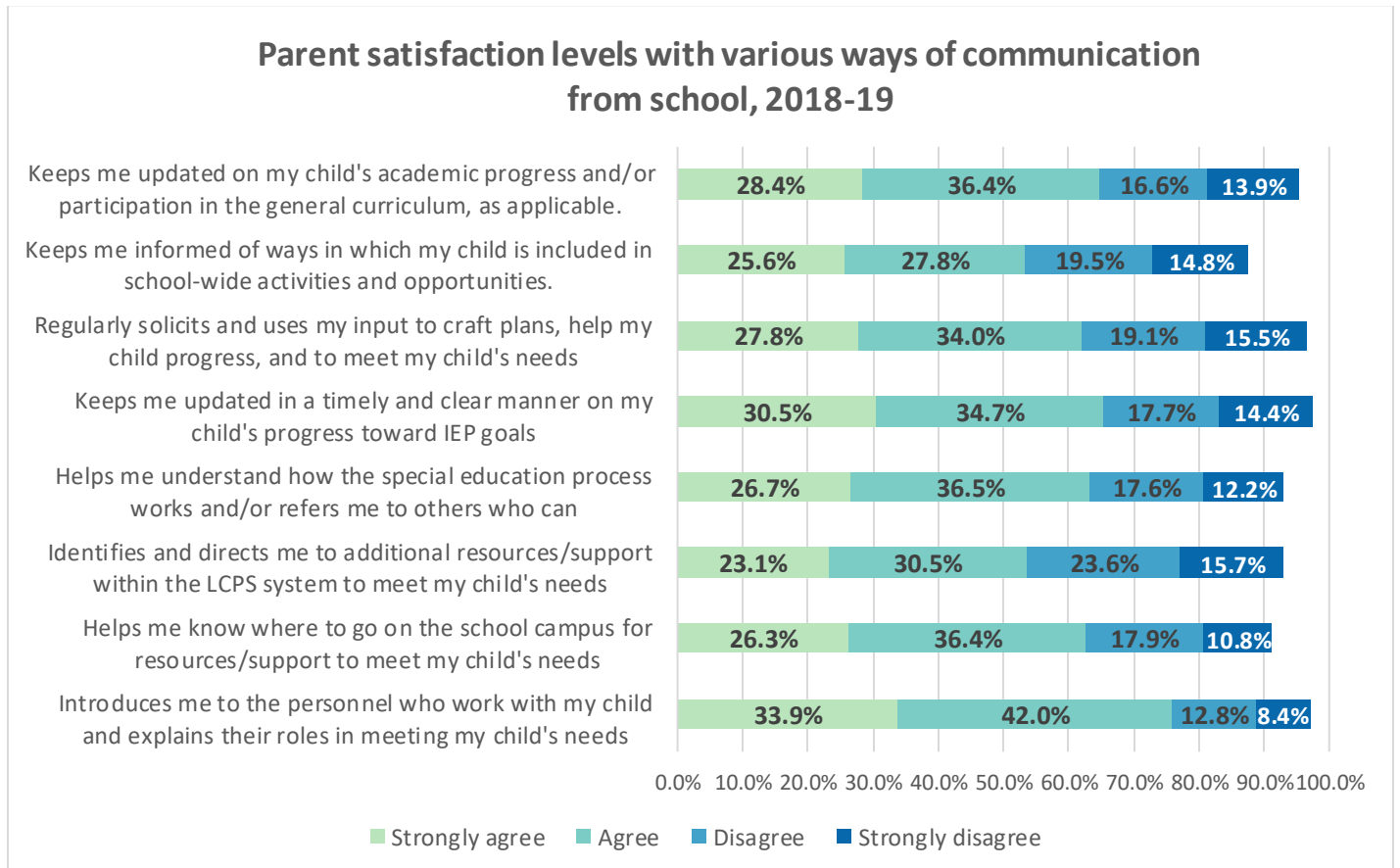


Exhibit reads: 28.4% of respondents strongly agreed that their child's school keeps them informed of ways in which their child is included in school-wide activities and opportunities. Note: respondents were given the choice of N/A as a response – for those columns not totaling to 100% the remainder can be assumed to be N/A. These data were removed from the exhibit in order to preserve/increase readability.

Table 4:

Survey Question: With regard to communication and/or support at the division level, please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following:

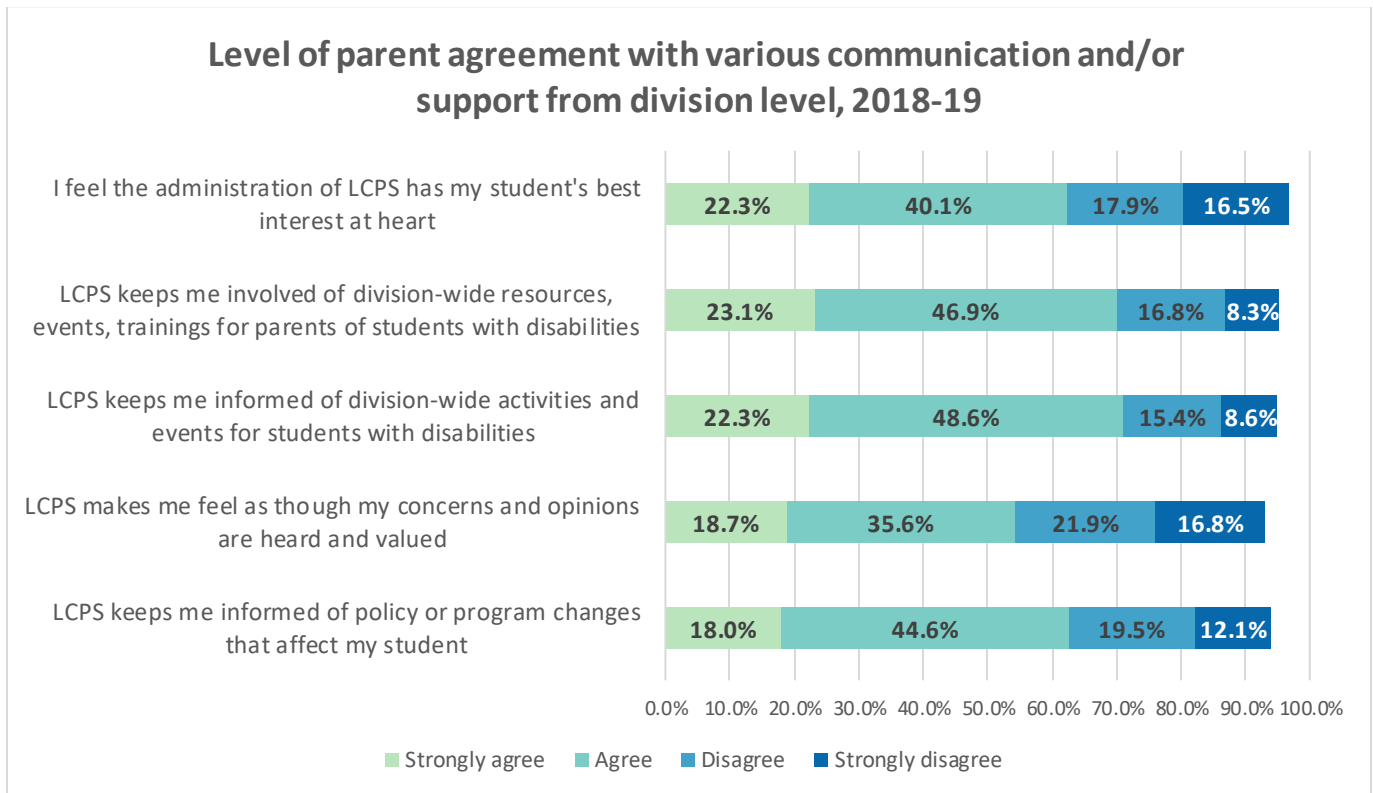


Exhibit reads: 22.3% of respondents reported strongly agreeing that the administration of LCPS has their student's best interest at heart. Note: respondents were given the choice of N/A as a response – for those columns not totaling to 100% the remainder can be assumed to be N/A. These data were removed from the exhibit in order to preserve/increase readability.

Table 5:

Survey Question: In the 2018-19 school year, how satisfied were you with the related services your student received in:

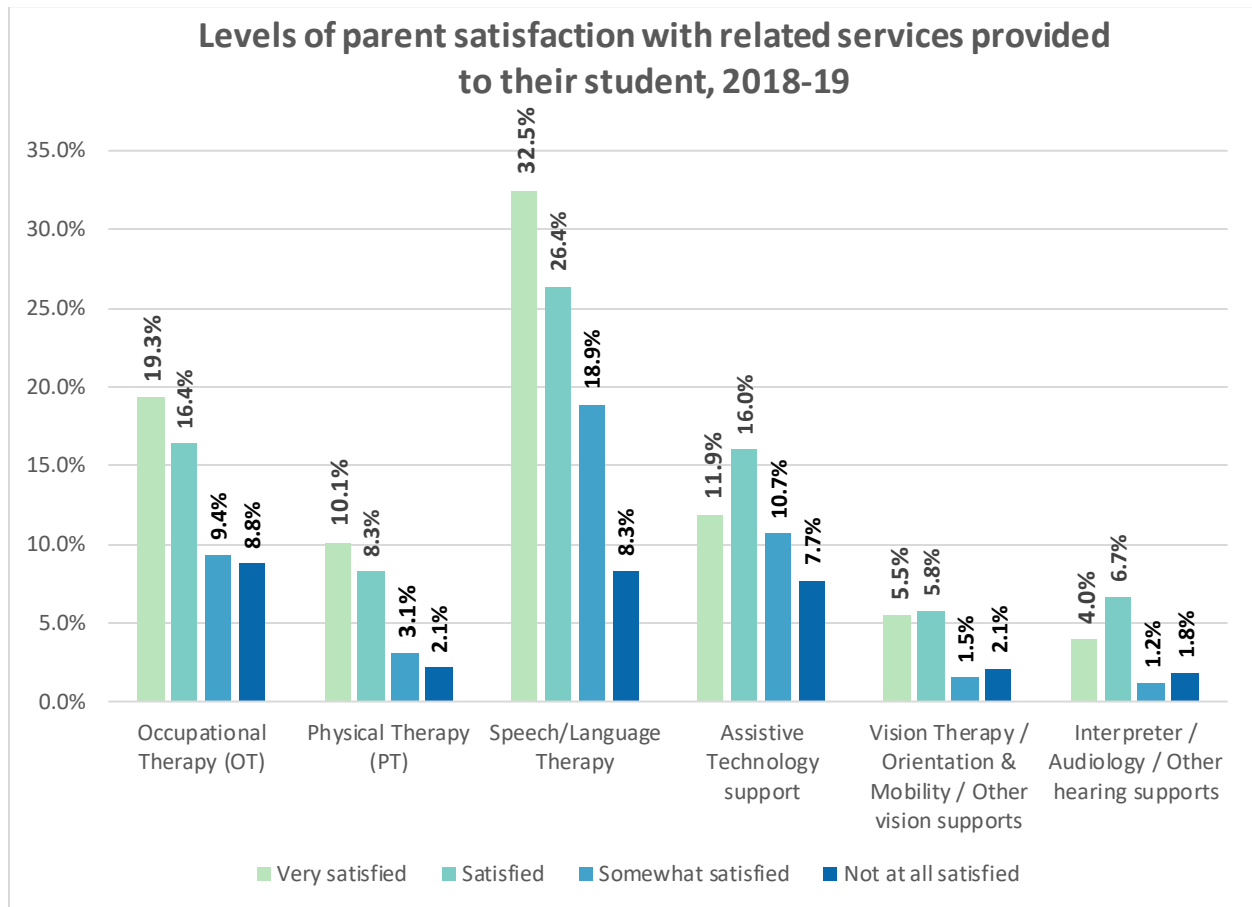


Exhibit reads: 19.3% of parents reported being very satisfied with the occupational therapy related services their student received in the 2018-19 school year.

Table 6a: **These next two are new questions this year**

Survey Question: To what extent do you agree with the idea that students with disabilities are treated equitably and/or have the same access as students without disabilities to programs and resources in LCPS?

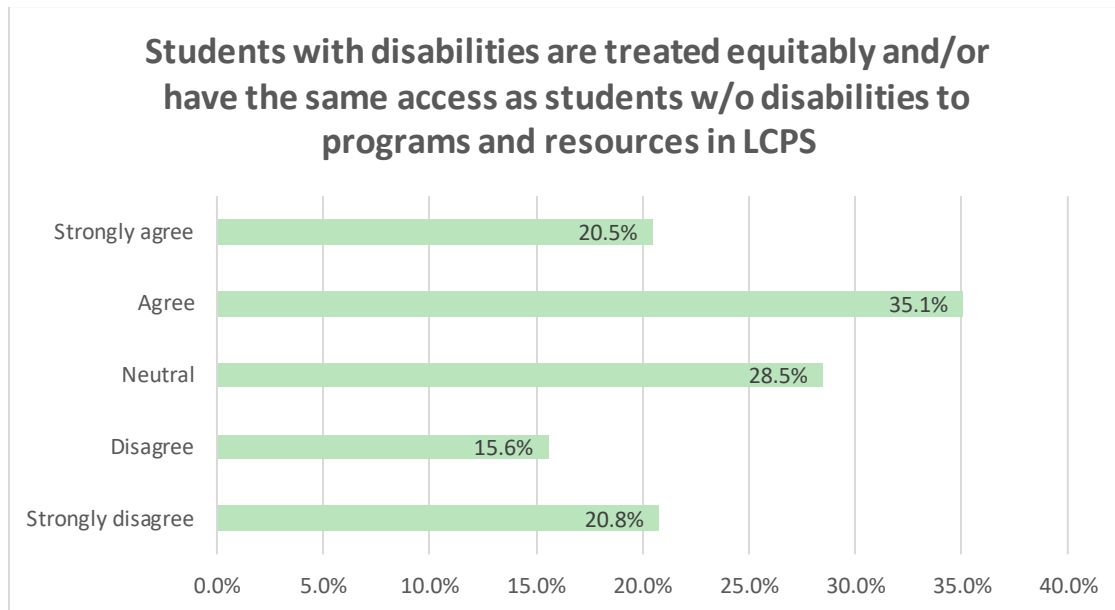


Exhibit reads: 20.5% of respondents strongly agreed that students with disabilities are treated equitably and/or have the same access as students without disabilities to programs and resources in LCPS

Table 6b:

Survey Question: To what extent do you agree that your student is treated equitably and/or has the same access as students without disabilities to programs and resources offered by your student's school (e.g. specials, after school programs/sports/clubs, school-sponsored events, social skills/guidance, etc.)?

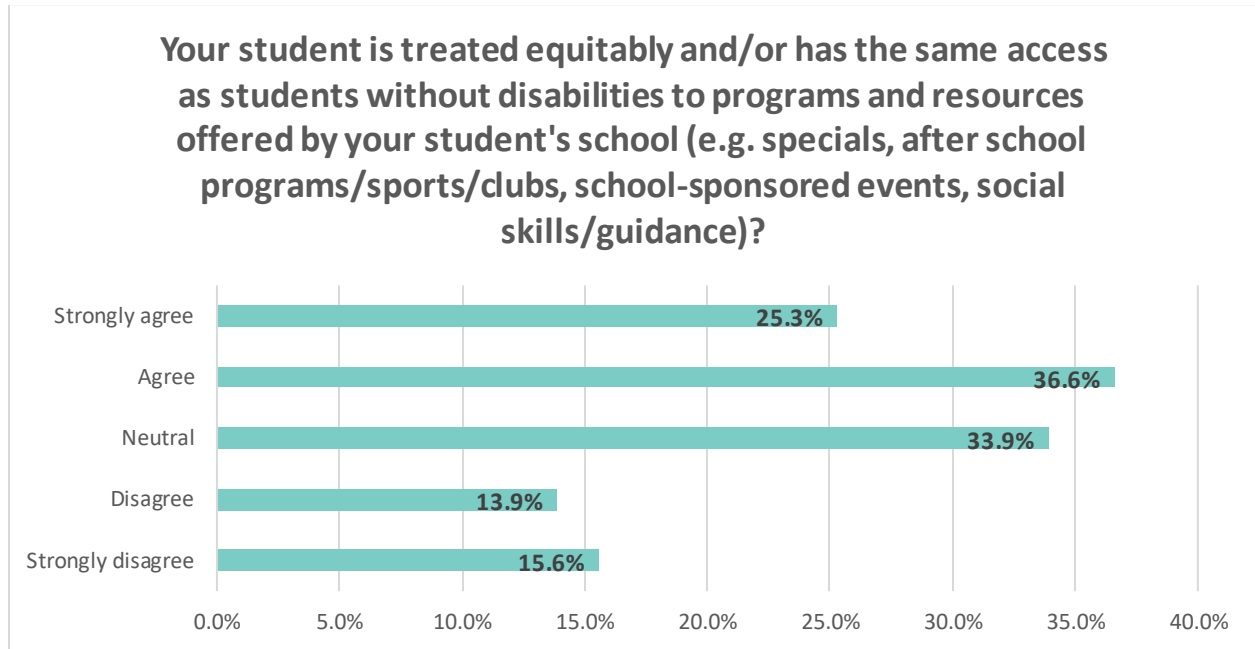


Exhibit reads: 25.3% of respondents strongly agreed that their student is treated equitably and/or has the same access as students without disabilities to programs and resources offered by their student's school (e.g. specials, after school programs/sports/clubs, school-sponsored events, social skills/guidance, etc.).

Table 7a: (these two tables are new questions as well this year)

Survey Question: How concerned are you about mental health issues (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety) and how they impact students in LCPS?

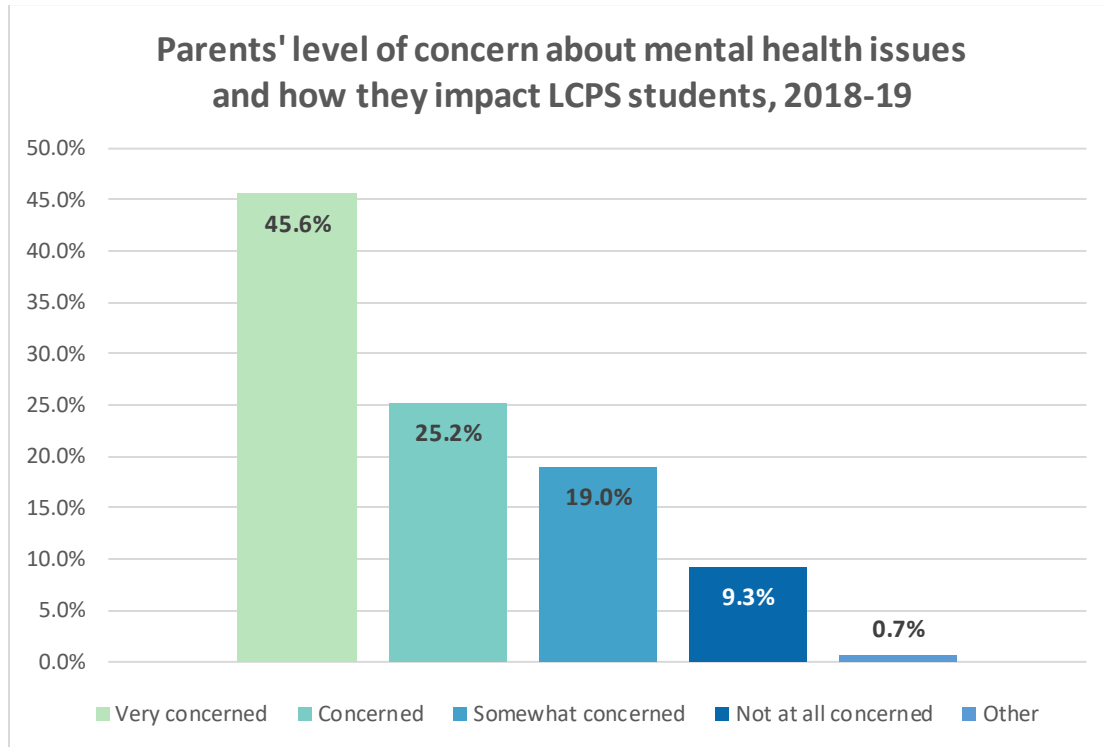


Exhibit reads: 45.6% of respondents reported being very concerned about mental health issues and how they impact students in LCPS

Table 7b:

Survey Question: Do you feel as though students have adequate access to support mental health issues through/at the school?

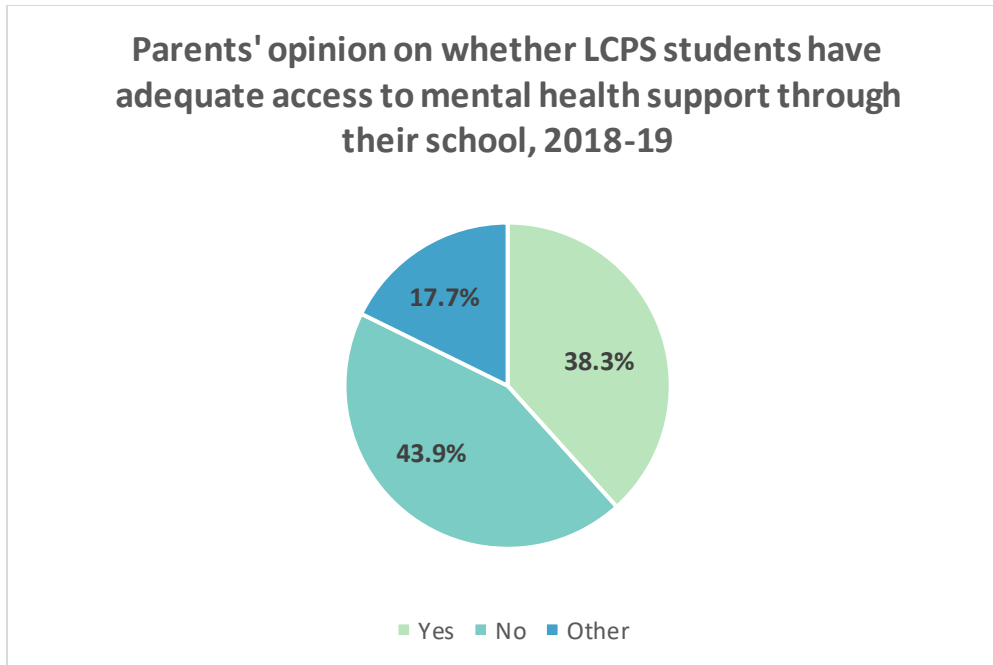


Exhibit reads: 17.7% of respondents reported feeling as though LCPS students have adequate access to mental health support.

Table 8:

Survey Question: As a parent, do you feel that you have access to resources that help you navigate the school system and support your student?

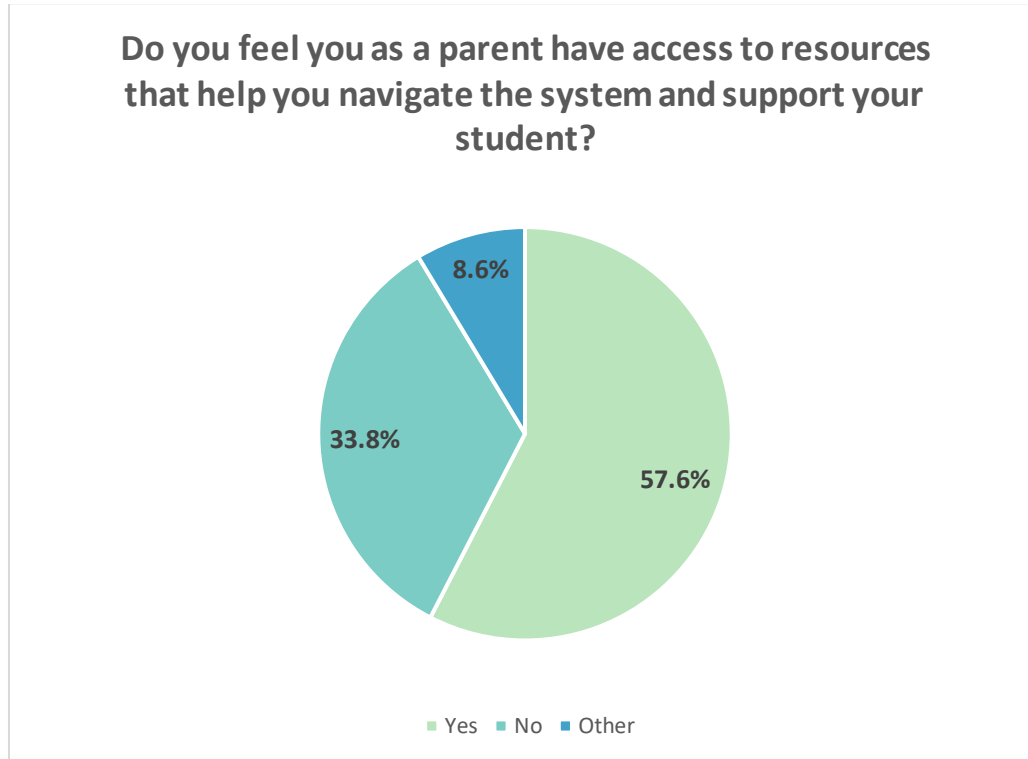


Exhibit reads: 57.6% of respondents indicated they, as parents, felt they have the access to resources which allow them to navigate the system and support their student.

Below are the parents who answered “other” to the question depicted in Table 8:

Do you feel you as a parent have access to resources that help you navigate the system and support your student?
“Access”? No one is blocking a doorway. Access isn’t the issue. A lack of explanation, insight and context is the weak point.
Don’t really know how to navigate the system.
Have to hunt for it or crowdsource online
Haven’t looked
I am not sure I know what resources are available.
I am very involved and know of a lot of resources but I have found them on my own or through other parents.
I do but if you’re not on top of it your child misses out
I do my own research

I do think I have access if I seek them out. Not obvious how to access them.
I feel that I have to hunt and beg for them
I feel that the district is not forth coming with supportive services outside of Parent Resource Center
I feel there are resources, yet I would like to see more.
I felt in the dark most of the time.
I have an advocate
I haven't struggled navigating the system but am not aware of resources.
I may have access to them but I don't always know about them
I must work to get access and help!
I sometimes feel overwhelmed with the various resources and the different ways they are accessed. Simplification is key.
I still don't know where the parent resource center is located.
i would love to know more
I'm not aware of all the systems available to support
I've had to pay for them, b/c no one within the school or district will actually help you understand, yet they say, "well you signed the IEP, it's a legal document"
In terms of the regular school days, yes because he has wonderful teachers and staff working with him this year. In terms of after school activities and programs other than the regular school schedule, no I do not feel as if I have the appropriate resources to support him.
It depends on the situation
It depends. Sometimes we do. Sometimes we "find out" about a "quarter project" 3 days before it is due when we are in Tampa on a family vacation (truth).
It is like pulling teeth to get connected to helpful resources.
Most of my knowledge of resources has come as a result of my own research.
Need better avenues, using technology or whatever to increase regular and planned dialogue.
Never really looked
Not always. We didn't even know about the Waiver system until just a few years ago
not from the school system but from my own professional resources
not so much in the beginning and not as much as I would like - i have researched and asked a lot of people on my own - the info may be there but not easy to find
Not sure
not sure all that is available
often had and continue to seek resources on my own
only because I am on the other side of the system
only because I'm an educator
Only by hiring outside advocate or attorney
Only if I ask for them. But you don't know what you don't know so it's a guessing game.
Only yes because I had to research and search for the info. It's not readily available in easy to find places or given proactively by the schools.
Parent resource services has been helpful

Parent Resource Services is only one I know which used to be great but has been having a lot of the same presentations over the past few years. Also, do not feel the new educational contact has the experience and knowledge to give advice beyond, "ask your school's SPED supervisor".
ParentVue is helpful, but it is dependent on being current, and even then it is only a retrospective view on what has been done, not what is due.
Private advocates are needed. PRC is nice and provide trainings, which is helpful, but no help navigating the system.
Somewhat, through grade book and teacher emails regarding homework.
Sometimes
Sometimes
Sometimes ParentVue is hard to navigate
sometimes. As a parent of a probably not college bound student, I feel a little lost as to what comes next.
Sometimes. Mostly I have to find these on my own
somewhat
somewhat
Somewhat, also feel that my student does not have severe enough disabilities, so we/she is not afforded resources and therefore we as parents have to seek and search out resources
Somewhat. Most is incomplete online
The one time I called parent resources they couldn't help me.
They exist, but the staff I have worked with does not encourage use of these resources.
To some extent
We have been at this for 12 years and we still feel there is so much we don't know or understand and one of us is a teacher.
Wish ParentVUE was easier to navigate and all teachers used it
Without my son's attorney and advocate I would be lost.
yes and no, most info is buried on county websites, but they don't want to spend money or give parents ideas about additional services they could request. The best option for most parents is to 1. be team player and understand that the teachers are under huge pressure and 2. bring an advocate so that concerns can be heard.
Yes and no. I get notifications/emails about support groups and general meetings. But it's hard to get certain detailed information/resources about things such as summer school.
Yes, but only because I am knowledgeable about the division's structure and maintain relationships throughout the school division.
Yes, and no. It is the parent's responsibility to find a teacher who can tutor during the summer in reading for those who have dyslexia - requiring OG
Yes, but I have to pay for it (advocates and attorneys). They are not provided by the County, nor would I accept it if it were. The entire system is tilted to the LCPS advantage.
yes, the parent resource center, yet they knew what school I was calling about when I did not share the information. I do not feel safe to share concerns

Survey Question: Are you familiar with Parent Resource Services?

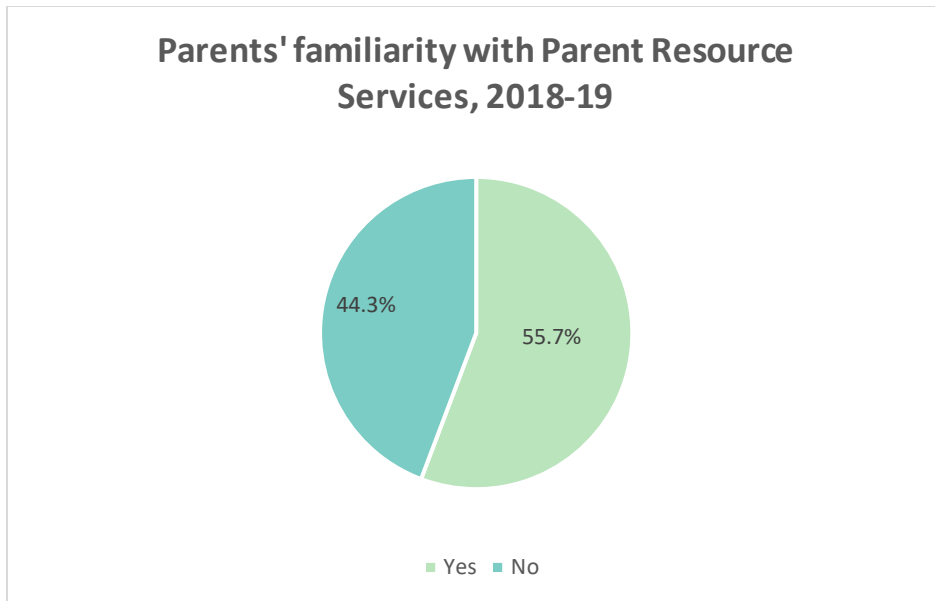


Exhibit reads: 55.7% of respondents reported being familiar with Parent Resource Services

Survey Question: If you have utilized Parent Resource Services, how did you do so?

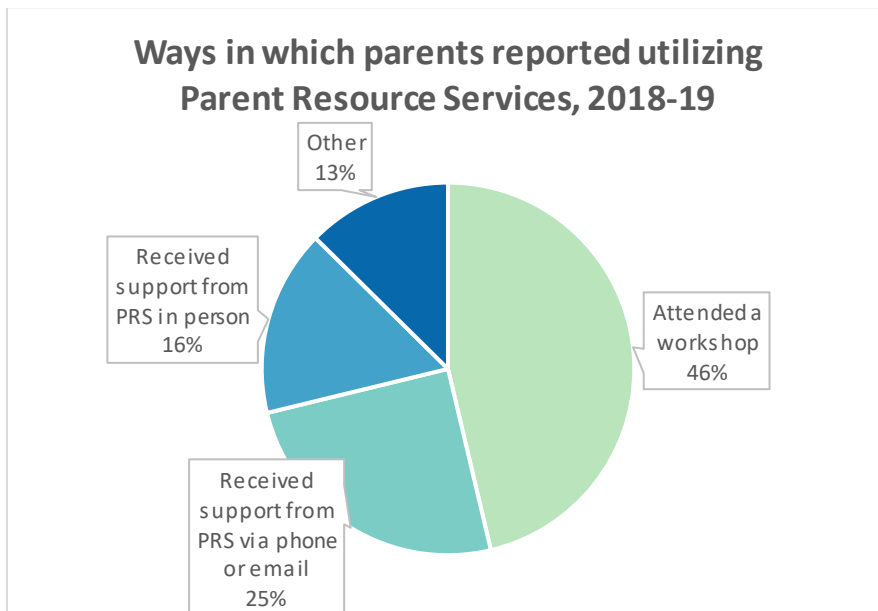


Exhibit reads: 16% of respondents reported having received in-person support from Parent Resource Services.

Survey Question: If you have not utilized Parent Resource Services, why not?

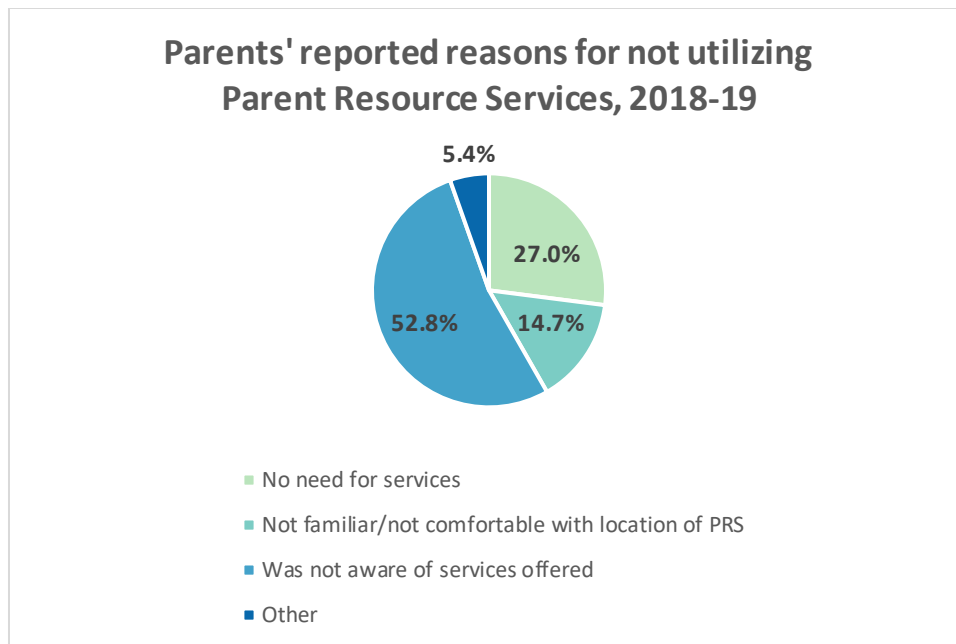


Exhibit reads: 52.8% of respondents reported not utilizing Parent Resource Services (PRS) because they were unaware of the services that PRS offered.

Survey Question: Have you attended SEAC meetings?

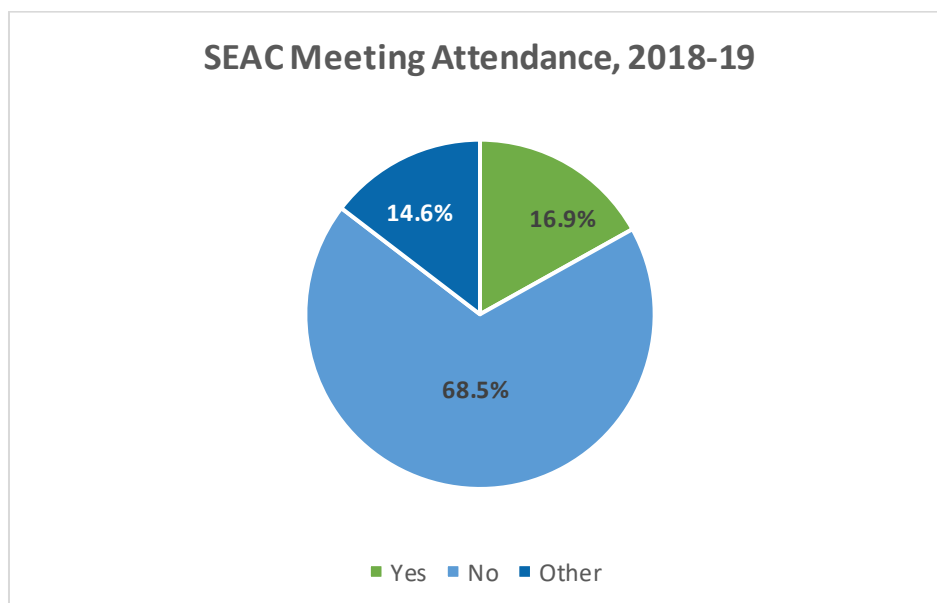


Exhibit reads: 68.5% of respondents reported not attending a SEAC meeting in the 2018-19 school year.

Survey Question: What barriers, if any, prevent you from attending SEAC meetings?

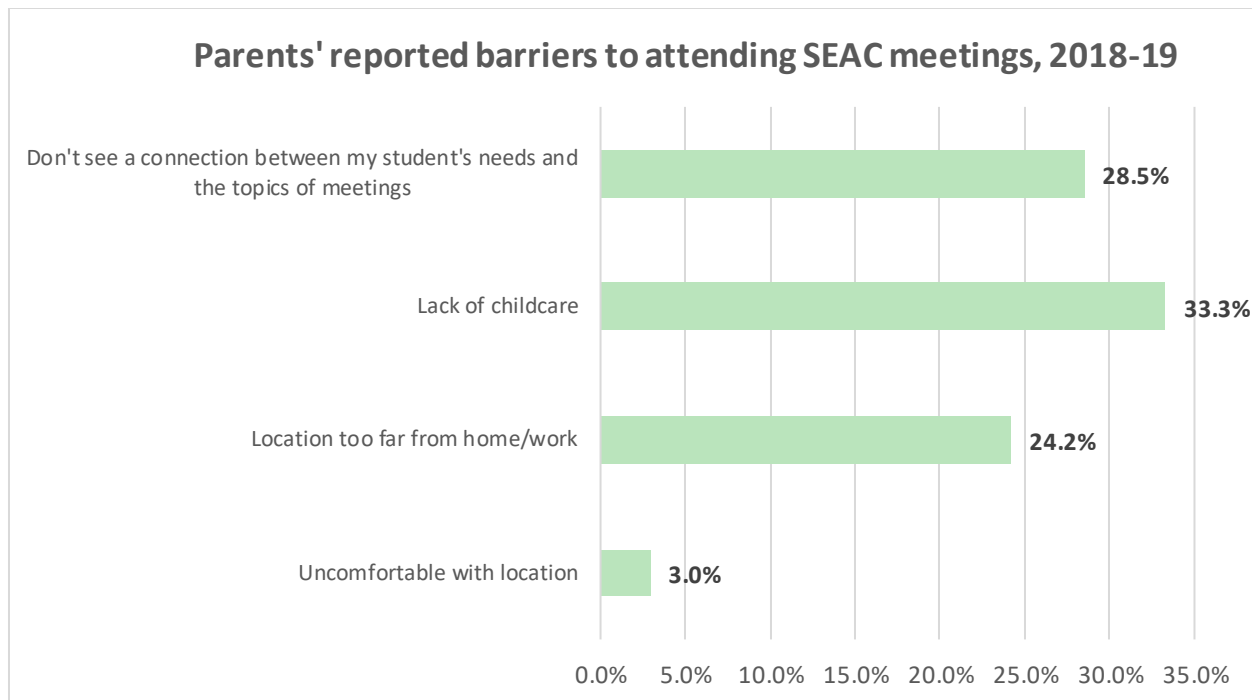


Exhibit reads: 28.5% of respondents reported not seeing a connection between their student's needs and the topics of SEAC meetings as a barrier to attending SEAC meeting.

Survey Question: What would make it more likely for you to be able to attend SEAC meetings in the 2019-2020 school year?

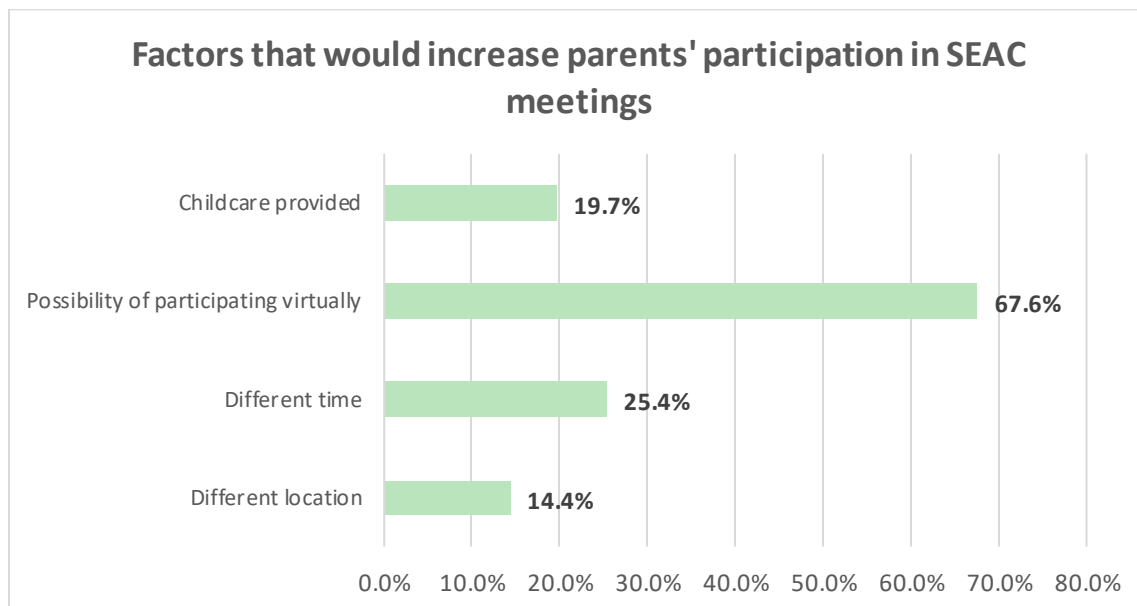


Exhibit reads: 19.7% of respondents reported that if childcare were provided it would increase their participation in SEAC meetings.

2018-2019 THEMES

ALL areas of satisfaction on the survey (as measured by rating scales) for overall services and processes, specific programs, direct instruction, communication/involvement with school and from the division, and the availability/implementation of related services **significantly decreased**.

SEAC believes that the goal for parent satisfaction levels should be a consistent rating of “satisfied” across all domains of measurement. “Somewhat satisfied” reflects mediocrity or worse, which should not be acceptable to the school division. Stated differently, and as confirmed in the short answer responses parents took the time to articulate, a rating of “somewhat satisfied” means that parents are neither happy with nor upset with services. Thus, “somewhat satisfied” should not be interpreted as an indication that LPCS is doing “fine” or “well.” Instead, it means that parents feel neutral, which should not be framed to suggest that the current conditions are acceptable or sufficient. In a school division that prides itself on excellence, passable is certainly not praiseworthy.

Overall survey findings are consistent with last year’s areas of concern and related recommended actions, with the addition of several “**red flag**” needs in the areas of:

1. Accurate data and incident reporting
2. Proper implementation of behavioral techniques (such as Ukeru)
3. Accessible instructional materials
4. Utilization of appropriately trained/licensed staff
5. Staffing levels
6. Grade level transition facilitation
7. Life/community skills preparation
8. Student performance on SOL’s
9. Compliance with FBA’s and BIP’s

Overarching themes identified as areas of need or concern through the short answer survey responses are reflected in the 2019 Recommended Actions, with illustrative quotes for context. Identifying information from the raw data was redacted from the comments that are used for illustrative purposes. Worth reiterating is that the goal of soliciting information from parents is to identify needs, gaps, and areas for improvement to fulfill SEAC’s role as an advisory committee to the School Board.

2019 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

(SAME AREAS OF NEED FROM 2018 WITH NEW OR MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS YEAR)

Area of Need/Concern 1: Policies, Practices and Procedures

One of SEAC's mandated roles per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (#5) is to *"review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board."* Historically, SEAC has not been provided with the opportunity to either proactively or retroactively review any proposed or ongoing special education policies or practices until recently (September 2018). This past year, SEAC established a policy committee tasked with developing a workflow with the Office of Special Education to receive, review and discuss relevant policies, present information and recommendations to the SEAC membership to vote on SEAC's input to such policies, and then present SEAC's position to the division staff and School Board.

To fulfill SEAC's required function to review policy/practices, SEAC has worked diligently over the past year to be properly included in the workflow for all relevant reviews, and to be given the opportunity and time for due diligence in formulating input on behalf of SEAC. Such a workflow remains in development and SEAC strongly urges continued refinement of a process that is responsive to the timelines of the staff and School Board, while respecting the role and availability of SEAC volunteers to perform its evaluation and craft well researched and carefully considered input.

Recommendation 1A: Refine and use a clear and consistent process for SEAC input and review of policy. The process, or workflow, is critical for a strong outcome. Involve SEAC on the front end of policy development processes to facilitate consensus-building and an awareness of the division's research, the evidence-based underpinnings, and the best practice considerations that were used in developing and amending proposed policy.

The policy workflow should include a minimum of the following steps:

- 1) Send policy to SEAC policy subcommittee with consideration of the timing of sharing the policy with a committee of volunteers that meet once per month,
- 2) Ensure SEAC is included in versioning and that SEAC is provided with each version, including the current, and

- 3) a) Include an explanation of how the policy aligns with current LCPS practices (PBIS, discipline, “growth mindset”),
- b) Current philosophies implemented in the schools,
- c) Research data that defines evidence-based practices,
- d) comparisons to other school divisions, and,
- e) rubric to align policies with the philosophies and values of the school district.

Recommendation 1B: Restraint and Seclusion –Provide regular reports to SEAC (that conceal identifying information) regarding restraint and seclusion incidences to allow SEAC to monitor and develop further recommendations throughout the year.

Specifically:

- a) Train all relevant staff in the proper reporting of incidents due to current practice of “finding work arounds/loopholes” to avoid reporting, which deflates actual occurrences.
- b) Put clear procedures in place to automatically assess for and address the trauma to students incurred from restraint and seclusion to avoid parents having to remove students from LCPS due to the trauma experienced by the child.
- c) Ensure that after a child is restrained or secluded, they not only see a nurse for a physical evaluation to detect and treat any injury, but that the child is also seen by a mental health professional for a trauma assessment and debriefing with child and parents.
- d) Use the PBIS program as the proactive measure as designed, which should eliminate the need for restraint and seclusion if implemented correctly.
- e) Ensure PBIS principles reflected in discipline policies.
- f) Re-examine if students are in least restrictive environment; If restraint and seclusion is needed and PBIS and de-escalation strategies are used with fidelity, students who still need restraint and/or seclusion may need a different setting to best meet their needs
- g) Re-evaluate the basic tenants of PBIS and the interventions that are delivered on each tier compared to effectiveness. Consider if more tools should be added to PBIS.
- h) Ensure that PBIS is integrated with the IEP team and referrals to special education (at Tier 2) and referral to mental health team (prevention/proactive approach).
- i) Include more close collaboration between mental health and IEP team and the consideration of wrap-around services to address underlying issues, while still in collaboration with the school team since the school is often the catalyst for certain behavioral escalations and need to be involved in taking responsibility and remediating the trauma triggers that are created in the school environment.
- j) Re-evaluate the understanding and implementation of restorative circles since often times the process is one that blames the student for the conflict while staff do not assume any of the responsibility for their contributions to the problem (which also plays into school refusal).

- k) Review and ensure that the Ukeru mats are consistently being used appropriately in each school and across the school division, and not in the same way gym mats were being used to corner and push a child into the seclusion room.
- l) Investigate the reporting of seclusion in instances when there may be another person in the room with a student or the door is left open, but the student is not permitted to leave (which is seclusion and often not reported).

Recommendation 1C: Student Observations – Retrain all Principals on LCPS Observation Guidelines, including that:

- a) They may not insist that parents provide a copy of the notes from outside observations since the policy states that while they are allowed to request a copy, the parent may also decline.
- b) They may not tell parents/professionals that they are not allowed in their school regardless of what the policy indicates.
- c) They must comply with the new policy.

Area of Need/Concern 2: Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness and integrative supports, appropriate use of reinforcement and discipline, organization and time management skills, self-advocacy coaching, developing strong work and study habits, and test preparation are consistently high areas of need within the special education population. While SEAC applauds the steps taken this year to secure and begin implementing a social emotional learning curriculum in some elementary schools, the selected vendor's curriculum does not have approaches tailored to or adapted for students with disabilities, who are often in most need of this type of direct instruction. Likewise, social emotional learning (SEL) should be expanded to all elementary, middle and high schools. Starting SEL in elementary school provides a good foundation, but SEL happens progressively with increasingly more complex skills needed to navigate the more difficult situations that characterize the angst in middle school and need for acceptance and self-efficacy that extends into high school.

Recommendation 2A: Social Skills - Implement a peer-reviewed research based social skills curriculum *that is delivered to students with disabilities in all grade levels* throughout the duration of the school year.

Recommendation 2B: Executive Functioning - Provide peer-reviewed research based executive function curriculum to support the age-appropriate development of executive

functioning skills for students with disabilities to include (but not be limited to) organizational skills, time management, planning and chunking assignments to meet deadlines, effective work and study habits (i.e. note-taking and techniques for studying), test preparation strategies, and stress management. The current curriculum offered in the 'Basic Skills' class in middle and high schools is insufficient.

Recommendation 2C: Mental Health - Develop peer-reviewed research based accessible and relatable supports used proactively for preventing, identifying, managing, and decreasing stressors and the resultant anxiety and depression *as it is manifested in students with disabilities*.

- a) Positions on unified mental health teams are remaining unfilled, thus not meeting the need.
- b) Better utilize unified mental health teams to make recommendations for services.
- c) Ensure parent and behavior team involvement when discussing and referring for services.

Recommendation 2D: Mental Health – Provide trauma training to all staff *who work with students with disabilities about the different ways common mental health issues can present differently in students with disabilities*.

- a) High school students with emotional disabilities (as indicated for eligibility in the IEP) should be provided with individual counseling by the unified mental health team, without group counseling being prerequisite to receiving counseling serves in the school setting.
- b) Counseling should be an explicit service outlined on the services page in IEP, not simply and vaguely offering “opportunities” for counseling support or outlining a general service on the Least Restrictive Environment page of the IEP, there is inconsistency across the county.
- c) While it is recognized that school division staff do not participate in the capacity of mental health practitioners, they are often the staff members who are most involved in the student’s lives and see the first signs of emotional and other concerns in their role as educators. If involved in PBIS and being proactive, division staff are capable of identifying issues and should be required to refer students to the unified mental health team.

Recommendation 2E: Mental Health –Ensure fidelity in implementing the Return-to-Learn initiative and both willingness and ability to execute the Return-to-Learn protocol properly.

- a) Ensure consistency across teams and schools in implementing Return to Learn to ensure that the plan is specific with clearly defined steps, actions and level of activity that can be objectively measured.
- b) Return to Learn plans should include some level of school-based counseling as the student transitions back to the campus environment.

Recommendation 2F: Behavioral and Emotional Support - Provide peer-reviewed research based training for all special and general education staff who work with students with disabilities in de-escalation strategies to manage behavior and provide appropriate emotional support during stressful and tense situations and ensure PBIS has been appropriately used.

- a) Provide dedicated, qualified, explicitly trained staff for intensive behavior programs. School based psychologists and social workers are used for conducting evaluations for special education services in addition to providing support services for general education students, group counseling, special education individual and group counseling, and support for school based intensive behavioral program, which is insufficient. Programs supporting students with intensive behavioral needs require dedicated staff.
- b) Intensive behavior programs should have a special education teacher who has mental health and behavior modification training and aides who have training, experience and knowledge in mental health issues to ensure that the team directly working with the students in the intensive behavioral programs understand how behavior intersects with mental health issues and can interact with the students accordingly and appropriately respond (particularly in crises situations).

Area of Need/Concern 3: Specialized Programs and Services

Providing speech therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology, music therapy, career and transition services, twice exceptional programs, specialized reading instruction, and intensive autism and behavior programs are critical to the success of large cohorts of special education students. Concerns are consistently expressed and have grown in seriousness over the past year regarding the availability and access, frequency, regularity and fidelity in which these programs and services are delivered.

Recommendation 3A: Career/Transition – Report metrics on the number of students being served in CAST. There is a significant need for independent living skills, workplace

readiness, and job training for our students with disabilities that are not college bound. Despite reports of having 250 business partnerships for our CII programs, many of these programs do not have LCPS students in them and their situational time, training and work is severely limited.

- a) Establish dedicated training facilities strategically placed within LCPS where students can come together to learn independent living and job skills.
- b) Ensure that the IEP team understands and implements individualized IEP post-secondary goals and coordinated activities that include as many targeted, coordinated activities per area of development as needed (e.g. education, employment, training and independent living skills) not limited to one per area.
- c) Ensure that legitimate job skills are being trained in our transition programing and that students are not just engaged in activities that do not have real-world job applicability.
- d) Establish IEP transition assessments to evaluate independent living skills and workplace readiness skill for students. While DARS can evaluate a student's, actual skill sets to enable IEP teams to measure the 5 core areas for work employment skills, not all students are referred to DARS early enough in the transition planning process. The current aptitude surveys are insufficient to measure these skills. Assessments should be identified based on the needs of the student and include a mechanism to identify independent living skills (where necessary), soft skills, work skills and needs to measure development and gaps for remediation plans.

Recommendation 3B: Career/Transition - Provide adequate funding to utilize a transit service provider to provide frequent and flexible transportation for CII that accommodates more students in a wider "allowable" geographic proximity.

Recommendation 3C: Job Training – Transition services are a related service and should be documented and written into the IEP as a direct service with support hours documented to accomplish the activities defined in the IEP. There is no reporting on what has been accomplished and often relying on the student or special education case manager to initiate a process.

- a) IEP's should clearly document the special education services that will be needed while attending MATA and AOL. This would ensure that teachers are aware of the student's needs in that environment rather than relying on an aide that the school sends along with the student.
- b) Provide dedicated Job Coaches at the high school level. Currently teaching assistants are trained as Job Coaches and they have other responsibilities that take away from their ability to devote their time to job coaching.

Recommendation 3D: Job Training – Provide a training options at MATA for students that could support different programs at MATA where they can develop specific job skills that are entry-level but necessary to assist within the different programs at MATA or in real life. For example, learning to sort items/inventory, stock shelves, rotate inventory, entry positions in cosmetology, prep work for culinary, etc.

Recommendation 3E: Community College – High school college and career offices should provide information and identify students who could be eligible for community college certificate programs or students who have the skills needed at the high school level to go into a workplace certificate program.

- a) High school career centers should have more than just college information and include resources on apprenticeships, postsecondary training programs that do not require a college degree, jobs that are suited for high school graduates, etc. to ensure that students with disabilities do not feel that the career center does not apply to them.

Recommendation 3F: Autism Support – Provide regular training in instructional methods and behavioral techniques for teachers and substitutes for students with Autism and measure the impact of that training. *Training should be provided before staff begins working with the students.*

- a) Communicate the skill levels and expertise that staff have in working with students with Autism to enable parents to understand who is working with their student and how they are qualified.
- b) Clarify the activities and outcomes generated as a result of the VCU grant so parents better understand how this LCPS/VCU collaboration has resulted in changes to the autism program and benefitted students directly.
- c) Develop programs and guidelines that address the unique needs of students with high-functioning autism who are typically integrated into the general education classrooms.

Recommendation 3G: Visual and Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HoH) Impairments – Ensure students with visual and hearing impairments are receiving instruction and instructional materials in accessible formats.

- a) Create an LCPS Guidance document defining what are accessible educational materials (AEM), the decision process, the provision of AEM workflow, best practices for the provision of AEM and related AT and a Guide for Providing AT for Students with Visual Impairments and publish on the LCPS website.

- b) Provide the proper assistive technologies in all school libraries to make them accessible to visually impaired students.
- c) Bolster Braille instruction and incorporate into access to the curriculum. Braille is being taught in isolation and not with the students' classroom materials to allow real time usage.
- d) Provide more than one staff option by contracting with an outside provider for orientation and mobility (O&M) instruction to teach cane and navigation skills to ensure proper oversight for services and a manageable caseload.
- e) Educate staff that expecting students to use their "residual vision" because they are "not blind yet" is an inappropriate response to students with visual impairment and does not provide equal access under ADA regulations.
- f) Develop written guidelines for students with visual impairments to adhere to federal and state guidelines and publicize those provisions on the LCPS website. Per VDOE Superintendent's Memo #257-19 these are required to be published on the LCPS website.
- g) Provide families a copy of the VDOE *Guidelines For Working With Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired In Virginia Public Schools* and use it during IEP meetings.
- h) Allow and encourage IEP goals to include the acquisition and increased fluency of ASL for D/HoH students.
- i) Provide ASL interpreters and/or cued speech transliterators for D/HoH students as a provision in the IEP, currently there is no ability to document these as related services in the IEP.
- j) Educate staff that expecting students to use their limited hearing (even while using assistive listening devices) as a reason for not providing an ASL interpreter or cued speech transliteration is inappropriate and does not provide equal access under ADA regulations.
- k) Educate staff that students eligible for special education and related services under hearing impairment or Deafness do not have to have any delay in speech in order to receive services. The IEP team is charged with ensuring the student's continued on-track progress, rather than closing a delay gap.
- l) Educate staff that a student's mode of communication is decided by the student and their family, not by the school system.
- m) Provide families of D/HoH students with the *Virginia Communication Plan* and use it during IEP meetings with these students.
- n) Develop written guidelines for D/HoH students that adhere to state and federal regulations and publicize those provisions on the LCPS website.
- o) Ensure that language assessment testing for D/HoH students is provided in all the student's native languages and by someone fluent in that language.

Recommendation 3H: Twice exceptional students – Students with disabilities who are also gifted or high achievers need to be provided with the supports and services needed to accommodate their disability **and** placement in appropriate, challenging classes and

academic programs that are commensurate with their level of intelligence and academic abilities.

- a) Offer tailored instruction to students with Autism who are also gifted, rather than only placing them in front of a computer for higher ability learning.
- b) Screen students with disabilities for areas of academic strength to support placement in honors or other classes with the support needed to provide accommodations to be successful in higher-level programs.
- c) Providing training and information to general education teachers emphasizing the fact that students with disabilities can also be gifted and that meeting grade level expectations may not be providing appropriate personalized learning.

Recommendation 3I: Dyslexia Screenings and Intervention– Need to add a normed RAN to early identification of reading intervention. RAN should be measured with a standardized and normed test in order to compare children’s naming time to same-age peers. Letter naming fluency, while a speeded task, draws on some of the same processes and thus a RAN and Letter Naming Fluency scores will be somewhat correlated. However, the serial naming of items arranged in an array/grid that RAN uses makes it a unique predictor of reading. It is also the case that a letter naming task would not tap the same processes as RAN unless the child is automatic in their letter knowledge; that’s why RAN is administered with colors and objects to young children. The best predictors of later reading difficulties from kindergarten are Phonological Awareness, Letter Name and Letter Sound Knowledge, a normed RAN (a timed measure of an array of known and repeated items, arranged in an array of left to right), and Family History of Dyslexia. A measure of word reading should be added in 1st grade.

- a) LCPS Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) and RtI/MTSS needs to clearly document what screeners and progress monitoring are being used by the district, what screeners and progress monitoring are being used for each school, what measures are put in place when a student does not meet benchmark and what triggers the student to move into the RtI/MTSS process. Parents need to be notified and have scheduled progress monitoring meetings. When children at risk are identified earlier and correct intervention is provided, up to 70-90% of at-risk children (bottom 20%) in K-2 can learn to read in the average range with effective instruction https://www.theins.org/files/meeting_ce/dc2018/CE_01_Tt60A7Q02w/CE1%20Fletcher%20Color.pdf (See Table 8)
- b) LCPS should consider the use of FastBridge in all schools K-3 for early identification.
 - a. Conduct a pilot study comparing the 2 screening instruments. Use current data from FastBridge and compare it to PALS-K and PALS 1-3. LCPS should consider utilizing the VDOE waiver and use the FastBridge assessment

instead of PALS for EIRI funds. [Proposal Requirements for Use of a Local Diagnostic Screening Instrument](#)

- c) Early screening should include consideration for early language impairment, as well as, family history of dyslexia.
- d) Provide and post on the LCPS website the guidance documents for RtI/MTSS teams that have been developed by the district and distributed to building administrators to guide schools through the screening to intervention process, and also, which schools have implemented the process. Each school should also post the names of screeners and RtI/MTSS progress monitoring instruments used and the criteria determined (benchmarks, cut scores, etc.) for placement in each tier. In addition, each school should post their criteria for movement between tiered levels, what research-based interventions will be used, the duration for each intervention, and the time frame that parents will receive a report on their child's progress.
- e) Provide structured literacy instruction as the Tier 2 intervention. Structured Literacy as defined by the International Dyslexia Association. Structured Literacy™ is characterized by the provision of systematic, explicit instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing and emphasizes the structure of language across the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), the relationships among words (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse. Please read the *Educator Training Initiatives Brief Structured Literacy An Introductory Guide*. <https://app.box.com/s/mvuvhel6qaj8tghvu1nl75i0ndnlp0yz>
- f) Structured literacy instruction should also include phonemic awareness exercises for blending, segmenting, deleting and substituting phonemes (syllable level, onset-rime level, basic phoneme level, advanced phoneme level) appropriate for each grade that are necessary for orthographic mapping. Please view the free webinar by Dr. David Kilpatrick, "Why Phonemic Proficiency is Important for All Readers." <https://www.corelearn.com/webinar-download-why-phonemic-proficiency-is-necessary-for-all-readers/>
- g) As stated in previous SEAC reports, SEAC strongly believes it is imperative that Tier 1 instruction be structured literacy for alignment of tiered instruction and equity of students.
- h) Provide progress monitoring for students transitioning out of an intensive reading program. Address methods to prevent a student from regressing, along with what is going to be used and how.
- i) Provide parents with full access to all screening and progress monitoring measures for all scores to include all sub-test scores.
- j) Fidelity and frequency of specialized reading instruction, to include:
 - a. Follow up classes to all teachers that are implementing OG in their classrooms, support on a regular basis, additional support after review of video database showing teachers how to introduce concepts that they can regularly view and use in their teaching,

- b. Prioritizing struggling students should get 1:3 ratio, with the MOST skilled instructor. The current RtI/MTSS process is not working with the level of middle and high school students requiring intensive reading instruction.
- c. Partnerships with parents and students in the upper grades to have a “zero period” (before school starts) for more intensive intervention every day. To help a student bridge the gap, there should be at least 2 hours of instruction and sometimes another 40-90 on top of that every day. “Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instructional time with a teacher. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality of instruction in great quantity.” Teacher quality x time = growth. Students at the high school level who are not proficient readers need viable options, IEP teams are very reluctant to add ESY during the school year or even during the summer.
- d. Offering ESY with a qualified trained reading facilitator.

Recommendation 3J: Specialized Reading for AAC users– Identify peer-reviewed research-based reading programs for students using AAC devices as a primary mode to communicate.

Area of Need/Concern 4: Culture and Climate

A pervasive concern relates to a lack of transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams to make decisions, and communication. Productive, collaborative relationships between LCPS and parents/students receiving special education students are essential for identifying, meeting and adapting to the changing needs of students with disabilities. This can only be accomplished when LCPS and parents/students work in partnership, acknowledge the shortcomings and mistakes made on both sides, and ensure the best interests of the student are prioritized.

Recommendation 4A: Transitions between grade levels – Develop procedures and require schools to implement practices to ensure that students with disabilities have a comprehensive grade level transition plan that takes into consideration the student’s unique needs.

Recommendation 4B: Retaliation – Set expectations for the actions of staff to abate the concerns of parents that if they raise a concern or make a complaint that their child will not be retaliated against.

- a) Develop a mechanism to ensure that parents receive a response when complaints of retaliation are filed that include recording, responding and tracking the complaints, as well as sharing this aggregate data publicly.

Recommendation 4C: Inclusive culture – Promote a district-wide inclusive culture in every LCPS school beyond sending Board resolutions and inclusive posters to schools to post on campus. SEAC remains concerned that inclusion is being misunderstood and being treated as a box to check.

- a) Create a guide to inclusive practices for school administration that outlines specific activities, behaviors and attitudes that can be implemented on their campus to support meaningful inclusion.
- b) Set the expectation for a welcoming environment for students with disabilities at school events, before/after school activities, special school-based programs (i.e. clubs, chorus, drama, student council, planning committees, morning news show, etc.)
- c) Require every school to post their inclusion action plan to their school website, and post LCPS's inclusion action plan to the LCPS website – and invite public input and suggestions on those plans.

Recommendation 4D: Communication – Increase parent communication about student academic, behavior, social, and emotional progress to increase parent collaboration and partnership with the school.

Area of Need/Concern 5: Compliance

Issues related to compliance with the IEP, consistency across the school division, and the implementation of supports and services continue to impact the performance, inclusion and achievement of students with disabilities. Even if compliance is a common deficiency across all school divisions, it should not be accepted as the norm in LCPS.

Recommendation 5A: IEP Implementation – SEAC is getting concerning feedback that middle and high schools are not able to implement IEP's with the current model of service delivery. Students are forced to be in self-contained classes to receive specially designed instruction that can be provided in the general education setting using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiation. Hold school personnel accountable for ensuring that each IEP is unique to each student and meets legal and regulatory requirements.

Recommendation 5B: IEP Implementation – Monitor, record and report fidelity and consistency in implementing all IEP supports and a response system that reacts swiftly when supports and services have not been implemented per the IEP.

Recommendation 5C - Behavior Intervention Plans (“BIP”) – BIPs development forms need to align with VDOE guidance documents to include tracking the reduction of targeted behaviors.

- a) BIP forms have been revised to take measurement and tracking of the target behavior out of the BIP. There is no requirement to meet quarterly to review progress or lack of progress. The behavior goals listed in the IEP often do not directly relate to measuring the behavior reduction outlined in the BIP, parents do not clearly know if the BIP is being implemented.
- b) Remove the statement in the BIP that schools can make changes to the BIP without parental notification. This is against VDOE guidance. The FBA and BIP are a part of the IEP, must be considered by the IEP team, and must be included in the IEP. Changes to the BIP without parental involvement or notification is the same as having an IEP meeting without the parent or excluding parental involvement. Because Virginia is a consent state, parent participation and consent must be obtained for any change.

Recommendation 5D: Assistive Technology Evaluations - IEP teams must be able to request evaluations, with the current Specialized Instructional Facilitator coaching model, IEP teams are very reluctant to request an evaluation. The process is not clear, the forms that are filled out by the case manager without parent knowledge should be completed as an IEP team to ensure the evaluations is targeting the request of the IEP team. Evaluations should be prioritized and completed within the required timelines set forth in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia.

- a) To provide appropriate assistive technology for individual student with a disability the IEP team should review the AT evaluation report and determine the required accommodations, if any, that are necessary for the student to access the curriculum, rather than just reporting that there are various technology options available to all students.
- b) Document AT services as a related service in the IEP. Update current IEP program to have the ability to add AT training to the IEP as a related service on using the identified technology.

- c) The Specialized Instructional Facilitators - Assistive Technology (SIF-AT) developed a *Resource Consideration Guide* which helps IEP teams determine least restrictive resources for implementation. The SIF-AT should facilitate the process with IEP teams of reviewing the *Resource Consideration Guide* and identifying AT for the student.
- d) Publish the *Resource Consideration Guide* on the LCPS website.
- e) **Recommendation 5E: Title II** - Ensure that all staff understand Title II Effective Communication requirements. Effective Communication requires deference be given to parents in choosing the mode of communication for their child, providing accessible print materials, providing interpreting services, assistive technology, etc..

Recommendation 5F: Qualified dyslexia training support, to include:

- a) Fidelity Checks - Remediation takes time and requires fidelity to the program; concerns are being raised about the fidelity of implementation to the program within the general and special education settings. Regular fidelity checks per student to ensure program fidelity and progress.
- b) Specialized Instructional Facilitators – Reading (SIF-R) should become certified in order to oversee the implementation of the OG program correctly and with fidelity.
- c) Allocate funds to hire more SIF-R to support schools. This would enable SIF-Rs to meet with teachers on a more regular basis. SIF-R are stretched out in too many schools.

Recommendation 5G – Restraint and Seclusion: Review Restraint and Seclusion reporting guidelines, there are many reported concerns with students being secluded and the incidents not being reported or counted as seclusion due to the interpretation of the policy language. Need to monitor data on students under the age of 9; students aged 9 and younger should rarely need seclusion, this needs to be monitored and reported.

SEAC STRUCTURE

SEAC COMPOSITION

SEAC is composed of 21 members who are parents and at least one educator who volunteer their time to our community. They are appointed for two-year terms by the School Board through an application and recommendation process. The executive committee of SEAC is elected by its 21-person membership to lead the work of SEAC throughout the year. SEAC also requests that a PTA/PTO Representative for each LCPS school be appointed each year to attend meetings, participate in discussions, and report back to the school on matters that affect special education. The following SEAC members were elected to the following officer roles on the SEAC Executive Committee for this year (2019-2020):

Sharon Tropf, Chair	seacchair@lcps.org
Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson, Immediate Past Chair	seacpastchair@lcps.org
Shehnaz Khan, Vice Chair, Planning	seacvicechairplanning@lcps.org
Criag Metz, Vice Chair, Communications	seacvicechaircommunications@lcps.org
Heidi Bunkua, Vice Chair, Membership	seacvicechairmembership@lcps.org
Kathryn Rosenbrook, Secretary	seacsecretary@lcps.org

As of November 2019, there are 5 open membership slots for the twenty-one-member committee. In addition to SEAC's executive committee member, the committee is composed of the following members:

Billie Jo Bevan	BillieJo.Bevan-SEAC@lcps.org
Nancy deLlanas	Nancy.deLlanas-SEAC@lcps.org
Jeannine Pepper	Jeannine.Pepper@lcps.org
Veena Sajjan	Veena.Sajjan@lcps.org
Amy Elledge	Amy.Elledge-SEAC@lcps.org
Lorraine Hightower	Lorraine.Hightower-SEAC@lcps.org
Cristen Marten	Cristen.Martin-SEAC@lcps.org
Erica Orbach	Erica.Orbach-SEAC@lcps.org
Jessica Rudd	Jessica.Rudd-SEAC@lcps.org

SEAC and its officers work closely with the new Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, Dr. Asia Jones (Asia.Jones@lcps.org) and the Director of the Office of Special Education, Dr. Patricia Nelson (Patricia.D.Nelson@lcps.org), who serves as the staff liaison. The staff liaison and her designees serve as consultants and resources to SEAC.

Chris Croll (Chris.Croll@lcps.org) serves as the school board liaison to SEAC. The school board chair assigns liaisons to various LCPS groups each year.

SEAC establishes subcommittees to examine and make recommendations pertaining to identified needs and concerns. All SEAC members are required to participate on at least one subcommittee. The SEAC Chair serves as an ex-officio member of all subcommittees and ad hoc groups. PTA/PTO Representatives to SEAC are encouraged to participate on subcommittees.

The subcommittees and groups for the prior year (2018-2019) are continuing in the current year (2019-2020) and are organized around the primary areas of need/concern and will address issues related to specific disabilities within the following frameworks:

1. Policies, Practices, Procedures and Compliance

Co-Chairs: Craig Metz and Shehnaz Kahn

2. Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Co-Chairs: Jeannine Pepper and Billie Jo Bevan

3. Specialized Programs and Services

Co-Chairs: TBA

4. Culture and Climate

Co-Chairs: TBA

PTA/PTO REPRESENTATIVES – Charts Below

School	Representative
Academies of Loudoun	Sarah Sliwinski
Aldie ES	Kimberly Lee
Algonkian ES	Jeannine Pepper
Arcola ES	Ratish Nair
Ashburn ES	
Ball's Bluff ES	
Bannekar ES	
Belmont Ridge MS	Alissa Allbee
Belmont Station ES	Rachael Perrot
Blue Ridge MS	Cassie Lauterette
Briar Woods HS	Natalya Nalley
Brambleton Middle	Rachael Perrot
Broad Run HS	Lisa Mathey
Buffalo Trail ES	Laura Dolan
Cardinal Ridge ES	
Catoctin ES	Anna Bickham Michelle Pizzarello
Cedar Lane ES	Devin Coleman-Houff
Cool Spring ES	Joe Sable
Countryside ES	
Creightons Corner ES	
Discovery ES	Rozeena Khattak
Dominion HS	
Dominion Trail ES	
Eagle Ridge MS	
Emerick ES	
Evergreen Mill ES	Heather Gast Beth Fowler
Farmwell Station MS	Mari Jacobs
Forest Grove ES	
Frances Hazel Reid ES	Laura Simpson
Frederick Douglass ES	Lori Leal
Freedom HS	
Goshen Post ES	

School	Representative
Guilford ES	
Hamilton ES	Courtney Miller
Harmony MS	Meredith Diglio
Harper Park MS	Pam Schoppert
Heritage HS	Julie Granata-Boyd
Hillsboro Charter Academy	
Hillside ES	
Horizon ES	
Hutchison Farm ES	Felicia Smith
Independence HS	Minerva Cruz
J. Michael Lunsford MS	Jennifer Gauvreau
J.L. Simpson MS	Michelle Pizzarello
John Champe HS	Susan Ruiz
John W. Tolbert Jr. ES	Rebecca O'Neill
Kenneth W. Culbert ES	Rana Marraccini
Leesburg ES	
Legacy ES	
Liberty ES	
Lincoln ES	Helen Corin
Little River ES	Iris Constantino
Loudoun County HS	
Loudoun Valley HS	
Lovettsville ES	Aimee Miller Meredith Diglio
Lowes Island ES	
Lucketts ES	
Madison's Trust ES	Dan Townsend
Meadowland ES	Sarah Gorter
Mercer MS	
Middleburg Community Charter School	
Mill Run ES	
Moorefield Station ES	Jennifer Vernon
Mountain View ES	Jessica Rudd Brooke Alletto
Newton Lee ES	
Park View HS	
Pinebrook ES	Laura Stapleton
Potomac Falls HS	Margie McGinnis

School	Representative
Potowmack ES	Danielle Bischoff
River Bend MS	
Riverside HS	
Rock Ridge HS	
Rolling Ridge ES	
Rosa Lee Carter ES	Sandra Backus Preethi Mothkupally
Round Hill ES	Heather Frakes Jody Walters Alexandra Davila
Sanders Corner ES	Britta Watters
Seldons Landing ES	Anca Vinson Alison Waters
Seneca Ridge MS	Freyja Bergthorson
Smarts Mill MS	
Sterling ES	Amber Catlett
Sterling MS	
Steuart W. Weller ES	
Stone Bridge HS	Veena Saijan Jeane Murck Meyer
Stone Hill MS	Dawn (Kimberly) Miner
Sugarland ES	Karina Andrade
Sully ES	
Sycolin Creek ES	Jocelyn Latta
Trailside MS	Amy Leach
Tuscarora HS	Julie Granata-Boyd
Waterford ES	
Waxpool ES	Becky Gruetzmacher Charlotte Lofton
Willard Intermediate	Susan Ruiz
Woodgrove HS	

BUSINESS MEETINGS

SEAC business meetings are held throughout the school year, typically on the first Wednesday of each month at the LCPS Administration Building. SEAC's bylaws require at least six (6) business meetings per year, which SEAC meets or exceeds. The agendas for business meetings are published in advance of the meeting on the SEAC web page (www.lcps.org/seac) and the meetings are open to the public. Minutes are approved at the next scheduled meeting and posted to the SEAC web page. Talking points are created after each meeting and posted to the SEAC web page for PTA/PTO Representatives to share helpful information and updates on their respective campus. Business meetings include reports and updates from SEAC officers, the Director of Special Education, Parent Resource Services, and chairs of subcommittees and focus groups, as well as appropriate follow-up on issues raised at earlier meeting and new business. Time is reserved at each business meeting for public comment. Guidelines for public comment are also available on the SEAC web page.



Executive Committee planning meetings are held regularly throughout the school year. The agendas for these open meetings are also posted to the SEAC web page in advance of the meeting. Similarly, subcommittee meeting agendas and minutes are posted, and they are open to the public.

SEAC's business meetings are well-attended. Sometimes the business meetings are paired with presentations that address areas of need and concern for the special education community. The purpose of SEAC business meetings are to identify and clarify the needs of special education students and identify emergent systemic issues.

SEAC's meeting format and subcommittee structure has been revised this year to focus more on engaging and involving the wider special education community.

PUBLIC COMMENT THEMES (2018-2019)

The public comment process is an important mechanism for obtaining feedback from the SEAC community in identifying widespread special education needs. The following themes were identified through the 2017-2018 public comment process and contributed to the development of the current year's recommended actions outlined in this report:

October 2018

- Nikki McMahon – (Dyslexia) Concern over 10 SIF-Rs to cover the needs of students/teachers in the county. Wants to have all teachers trained in the county. Would like to see more SIF-Rs to help teachers in implementing these programs. Listed possible ideas to help teachers.
- Nancy DeLlanis (Dyslexia) 3 students in LCPS; listed ways of to better help students who are diagnosed with dyslexia and concerned about it being implemented (inconsistent by schools and not with fidelity). Hard to measure their success. Progress Monitoring -
- Kelly Huff-Snyder - (Dyslexia) 2 children in LCPS; removed daughter from high school due to not getting answers that she was requesting; recognizing the steps LCPS has made but they are too small; wants to be looking at specialized learning for ESY students for reading; commented on consistency through LCPS

November 2018

- Heidi Bunkua – Draft Restraint and Seclusion Regulation – Concern how the policy goes against PBIS (Positive Behavior I S).
- Jeanie Muark – Bullying of Students with Special Needs – Lack of proactive supports and working with parents to stop bullying, and the lack of supports for the emotional harm caused by the bullying.

December 2018

- Sharon T – Systemic issue across the county of students not being provided accessible educational materials; identified this as a systemic issue 2 years ago in a public comment; need to develop guidelines for creating and disseminating accessible materials.
- Marie F – Need for scholarships for students with disabilities who graduate from LCPS

January 2019

- There were no public comments offered at the January 9, 2019 meeting

February 2019

- Heidi Bunkua – question was posed about what was discussed in a meeting with Delegate LaRock about Project Based Assessments and it being accessible for students with disabilities

March 2019

- Jennifer Vernon – Team Teaching – Team taught or co-taught middle school and high school level classes in LCPS are not serving our students in an effective way. This is something that I have heard from every parent that I have spoken to who has a student in these types of classes. Students in these classes are not receiving their service minutes or appropriate specially designed instruction per their IEPs. Many of these classes do not have the recommended general education teacher and special education teacher. Instead they have aides who do not have the specialized training or ability to effectively provide meaningful instruction for our kids. This is something SEAC should consider looking at.

April 2019

- Sharon Tropf – Restraint & Seclusion; use of seclusion being used as a behavioral practice and not as an emergency measure. Parents not being informed of time and number of seclusion events.
- Anonymous – Restraint & Seclusion; concern over definitions and parents not being made aware of the incidents of seclusion
- Heidi Bunkua – Classroom observation guidelines; prescheduled, only 30 minutes, and escorted is now being applied to private outside providers; requiring
- Kevin – LCPS HS Student– students with learning disabilities and their experience of being made to feel they are not worthy to be in honors classes; students in honors classes being treated differently by teachers; teachers do not want to provide accommodations due to disability

May 2019

- Cheryl Chirillo – special permissions for credit accommodations for student to do not meet SOL requirements for Standard Diploma; LCPS has not adopted procedures which is denying current students to achieve their Standard Diploma; looking for procedures to be in place by the fall of 2019

SEAC POLICY PUBLICATIONS FOR 2018-2019

Restraint and Seclusion - December, 2018

https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/Restraint_and_Seclusion

https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/File:Seac_restraint_seclusion_report.pdf

Special Education Advisory Committee Policy, Practices and Procedures Subcommittee. "(Proposed) Policy 5345: Restraint and Seclusion of Students Review, Findings and Recommendations Report." December 9, 2018.

Homebound and Home-Based Instruction - March, 2019

https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/Homebound_and_Home-Based_Instruction

https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/File:Seac_homebound_homebased_policy_report.pdf

Special Education Advisory Committee Policy, Practices and Procedures Subcommittee. "(Proposed) Policy 5360: Homebound and Home-based Instruction Review, Findings and Recommendations Report." April 3, 2019.

Special Education (Generally) Policy - April, 2019

[https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/Special_Education_\(Generally\)_Policy](https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/Special_Education_(Generally)_Policy)

(No report because SEAC unanimously voted to recommend that the School Board accept the current revision of the proposed policy)

Observations - April, 2019

<https://loudounseac.miraheze.org/wiki/Observations>

(No report because the draft was a "practice" document, not a School Board Policy)

PRIOR YEAR'S PROGRAMMING (2018-2019)

Topics for SEAC's monthly presentations are generated from community interest, informational needs, and SEAC's priorities. Last year's presentations were well attended and occurred in conjunction with monthly business meetings. SEAC established explicit goals for its programs last year, which were to share progress and updates regarding SEAC's ongoing priorities and concerns, and to deliver a panel presentation that provided deeper information to a sophisticated parent audience. SEAC received feedback that programs were not always as comprehensive as expected and, in some cases, did not illuminate progress or answer questions as well as attendees hoped. SEAC has incorporated this feedback into the current year's program planning. The prior year's schedule was as follows:

<u>September 5, 2018:</u>	Orientation for PTA/PTO Reps and SEAC Members, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. SEAC Membership Business Meeting 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
September 26, 2018:	SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>October 3, 2018:</u>	Presentation: An Update on Dyslexia Services and Supports 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. SEAC Business Meeting, 7:15 – 8:30 p.m.
October 10, 2018:	SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>November 7, 2018:</u>	SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>December 5, 2018:</u>	Presentation: Current LCPS Restraint and Seclusion Regulations, 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. SEAC Business Meeting, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>January 9, 2019:</u>	SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
January 23, 2019:	SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>February 6, 2019:</u>	Overview LCPS's Proposed Special Education Budget, 6:00 – 7:15 p.m. SEAC Business Meeting, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
February 11, 2019:	SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
<u>March 6, 2019:</u>	Presentation: Conscious Discipline, Alexis Gruehn, Horizon Elementary School, 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.; SEAC Business Meeting, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

March 26, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

April 3, 2019: Special Education Department Updates, 6:00– 7:15 p.m.
SEAC Business Meeting, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

April 24, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, Corporate Dr., Ashburn, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

May 1, 2019: Autism Program and VCU Autism Grant Update : Dr. Joy Engstrom, Autism Supervisor and Special Education Department Updates: Dr. Asia Jones, Asst. Superintendent, Pupil Services, 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.

- Special Education Office Staffing
- Social/Emotional Learning Curriculum and Specialist
- Review Draft Policy 5330: Special Education Student Eligibility and Placement Procedures
- Review Draft Policy 5340: Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities

SEAC Business Meeting, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

May 15, 2019: SEAC Annual Excellence in Special Education Awards Ceremony, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Briar Woods High School, Ashburn

CURRENT YEAR'S MEETING SCHEDULE (2019-2020)

September 4, 2019:	Meet and greet with Dr. Jones and Dr. Nelson 7:00 p.m.
September 11, 2019:	Orientation for PTA/PTO Reps and SEAC Members, 6:00 p.m.– 7:00 p.m.
October 2, 2019:	The Function of SEAC by Hank Millward, VDOE; and Review of Special Education Areas of Concern 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. SEAC Business Meeting, 7:15 p.m.– 8:30 p.m. Update on Restraint and Seclusion
November 6, 2019:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m.– 8:30 p.m. Dyslexia Identification; Review of the Annual Report
November 20, 2019:	Discipline Disproportionality Part 1 - MSACC Joint Presentation and Panel Discussion with SEAC 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
December 4, 2019:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Presentation - Mental Health, Bullying and School Refusal, 7:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
January 8, 2020:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m. Presentation - Trauma Informed Classrooms, 7:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
February 5, 2020:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Presentation – Inclusive Practices, 7:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
March 4, 2020:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.; Annual Plan Presentation Discipline Disproportionality Part 2- Joint Presentation and Panel Discussion with MSACC 7:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
April 1, 2020:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Presentation – Twice Exceptional Students, 7:15 – 8:30 p.m.
May 6, 2020:	SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
May 19, 2020:	SEAC Annual Excellence in Special Education Awards Ceremony, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Briar Woods High School

ANNUAL EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AWARDS



The Annual Recognition of Excellence in Special Education Awards program is an important way for the LCPS community to thank those who through dedication, creativity, patience and determination excel at helping LCPS students receiving special education to experience success. Award recipients and nominees serve as role models as they promote acceptance and inclusion and an environment where every student is valued, welcomed and encouraged to succeed.

This past year marked the 9th anniversary of the annual awards ceremony. It was held at Briar Woods High School and officiated by Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson, SEAC Chair, who also coordinated the beautiful program. Several elected officials were invited and attended the awards ceremony. Superintendent Williams offered opening remarks, along with School Board Chairman, Jeffrey Morse and Delegate David Reid. Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services, Dr. Asia Jones provided closing remarks.

Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton was represented by one of her staff members, and several other elected officials who could not attend sent congratulatory messages and words of support. Chris Croll, SEAC's liaison from the School Board and John Lody, Director of Diagnostic and Prevention Services and Interim Director of Special Education joined the officials who offered remarks as part of the program in personally congratulating each award recipient. Opening remarks by distinguished leaders and guests communicated a powerful message about the value of inclusion and the significant contributions that students with disabilities can make that enrich learning for everyone and promote acceptance.



Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Special Education

Awards Ceremony

Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.,

Briar Woods High School Auditorium
22525 Belmont Ridge Rd, Ashburn

Honoring exceptional educators, programs, parents and students who go above and beyond what is typical and expected to positively impact and set a standard of excellence for the success of students with disabilities.

Our Outstanding 2019 Award Recipients:

STUDENTS/PEERS/PARENTS

Hannah Kerr
Andrew Hak
Aradhana Ravi
Zoya Maheen
Hailey Pack
Ulises Amaya Henriquez
Kendall Foris
Keyan Tarawneh
Kara Gill
Macye Rinkor
Bridget Barnes
Caroline Sesin, Lilly Johnson & Sierra Lamb
Brian Zimmerman & Family

AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING:

Peer Advocacy
Safety Patrol Peer
Peer Support
Peer Empathy
Peer Tutor
School Citizen
Peer Acceptance Champion
Peer Ambassador
Peer Buddy
Adaptive PE Peer Support
Peer Outreach
Friendship
Peer Mentor & Inclusive Family

SCHOOL:

Goshen Post ES
Rosa Lee Carter ES
Rosa Lee Carter ES
Liberty ES
Liberty ES
Cedar Lane ES
Horizon ES
Horizon ES
Trailside MS
J. Michael Lunsford MS
Freedom HS
Evergreen Mills ES
Freedom HS

ADMIN/SUPPORT TEAM:

Ryan Mouw, Assistant Principal
Sherri Foster-Craft, Cafeteria Manager
Colleen Hurley, Counselor
Jennifer Reed, Director of Counseling

Empowerment
Meaningful Learning
Unified Sports Program
Special Ed Buddy Program

Rosa Lee Carter ES
Rock Ridge HS
Freedom HS
Tuscarora HS

GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS:

Alexis Gruehn
Shauna Olevson
Justin Daniel

Social/Emotional Learning
Music Education
Theatre Arts Education

Horizon ES
Sanders Corner ES
Tuscarora HS

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS:

Agnes Teets
Melissa Binetti

Community-Based Spec Educator
Early Childhood Special Ed

Middleburg Comm Charter
Hillside ES

Tracy Hurst	Special Ed Teacher	Mill Run ES
Megan Espinosa	Special Ed Teacher	Discovery ES
Katherine Gunderson	Special Ed Teacher	Sycolin Creek ES
Denise Gant	Special Ed Teacher	Lowes Island ES
Tyler Unikewicz	Special Ed Teacher	Belmont Station ES
Hannah Doss	Special Ed Teacher	Stone Hill MS
Jerrold Bowman	Special Ed Teacher	Riverside HS

GROUPS/TEAMS:

Eagle Ridge Special Education Team

Dave Barlock, Muriel Holland, Anne Capsalis,
Emily Davis, Kelly McNamee, Jason Alexander
& Austin Campbell

Integrated Team Approach

Eagle Ridge MS

Unified Basketball & Track Teams

Students: Sam Mason, Taylor Gammill, Nick Twetten,
James Nunaley, Robert Field, Colin Bellows, Jacob
Lautenschlager, Darryn Pitvoric, Carter Balderson,
Brianna Henriquez, Matt Thompson, Sarah Thompson,
Bailey Kuhn, Mandy McGroddy, Zach Franco, Anna Garbe,
Jack Garbe & Josh Baird

Track Coaches: Shelly Franco, Greg Franco

Assistant Track Coach: Josh Judd

Basketball Coaches: Jacqueline Garbe & Cynthia Clark

Unified Sports

Loudoun Valley HS

Rock Ridge Performing Arts

Anthony Cimino-Johnson, Rebekah Hess,
Jordan Markwood & Peter Johnson

Inclusive Performing Arts Program

Rock Ridge HS

PROGRAMS:

John Champe Fine Arts Department

Jonathan Phillip, Regina Butler, Jamieson Carr,
Brittany Ebhardt, Ethan Lawrence, Melanie
Robison & Nicki Cabaniss

AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING:

Special Ed Mentoring Program

SCHOOL:

John Champe HS

Project Search & The National Conference Center

LCPS Team: JoAnne Carroll, Heather Brewington,
Mary Young

Didlake: James Glover, Meghan Stubbs,
Emily Meyers

DARS: Amanda Schmidt

National Conference Center: Todd Goldian,
Geoff Lawson & Helen Kendall

Job Trng & Community Collaboration Transition Services

Inclusive School – Legacy Elementary

All Legacy Staff, with special call-outs to:

Matthew Dickersheid, Susan Mabee, Brandy
Crowley, Lynette Sprouse and Katie Wheedleton;
Kimberly Maxwell; Jennifer Askelson; Ariane Axt;
Michelle Emanuel; Deborah Davidoff; Lulu
Fantilaga; Courtney McCartney; &
Mrs. McCartney's 4th Grade Class

Systemic Support & Acceptance

Legacy ES

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

2018 SATISFACTION SUMMARIES TO COMPARE TO 2019 TABLES IN THE BODY OF THE REPORT

SERVICES

Table 1:

Survey Question: Based on your experience with your special education student, during the 2017-18 school year, how satisfied have you been with:

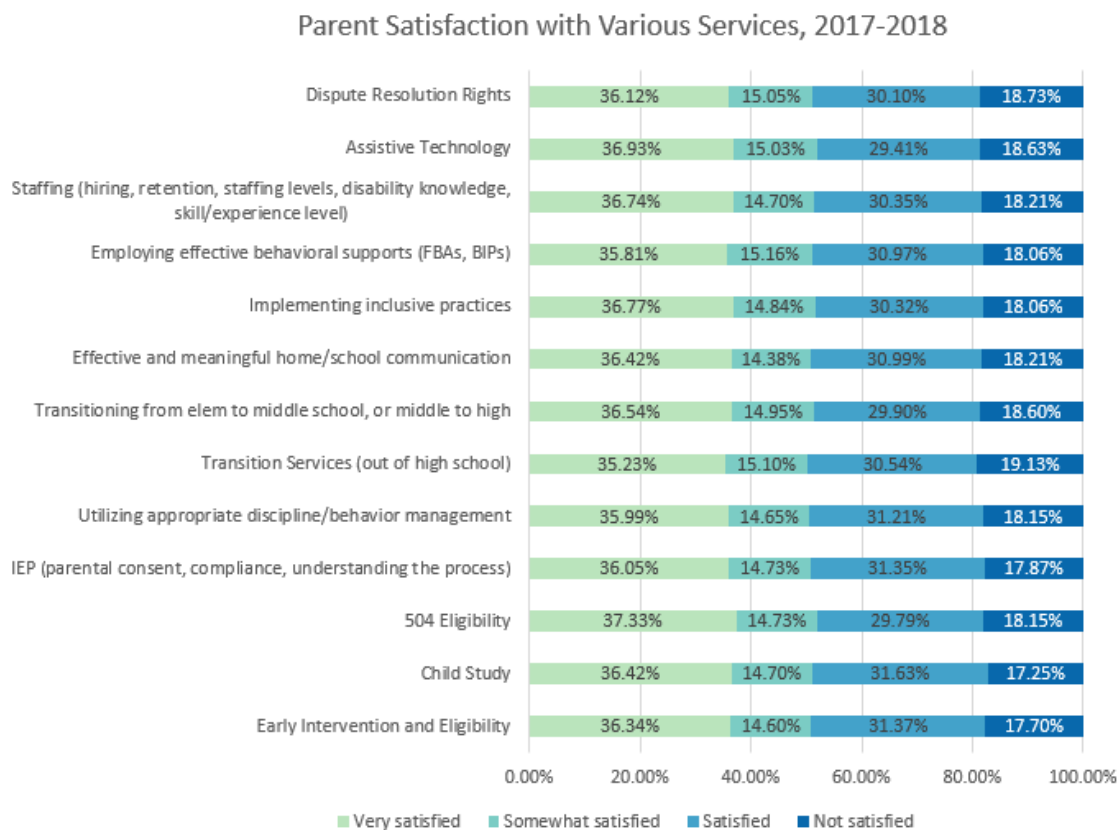


Exhibit reads: 36.12% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the Dispute Resolution Rights they and/or their student received during the 2017-2018 school year.

Satisfaction ranged from 80-83% "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" for parents' experience with the services (early intervention and eligibility, child study, 504 eligibility, all parties understanding the IEP process, appropriate discipline/behavior management, transition services out of high school, transition between grade levels, home/school communication practices, inclusive practices, effective behavioral supports/FBAs, staffing, AT, dispute resolution rights).

SCHOOL/CLASSROOM

Table 2:

Survey Question: How satisfied have you been with the school/classroom program your student attended in the 2017-2018 school year?

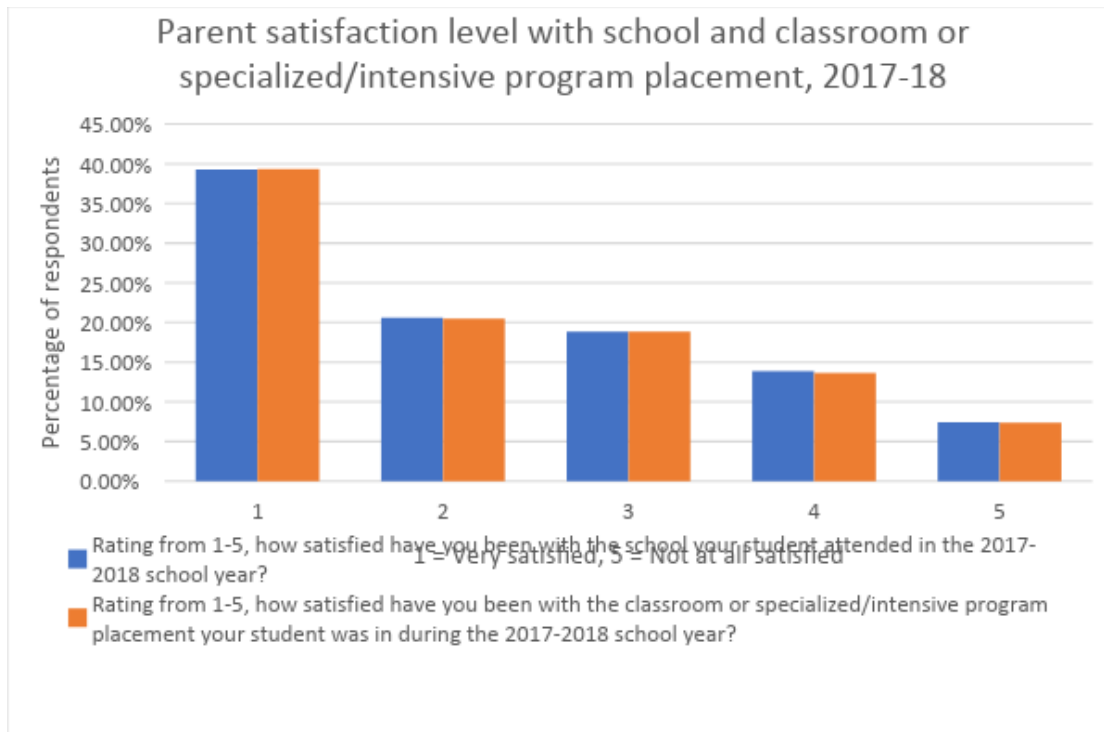


Exhibit reads: 39.25% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the school their student attended in the 2017-2018 school year.

Approximately 79% of parents rated from neutral to very satisfied with the school and classroom program their child attended.

INSTRUCTION

Table 3:

Survey Question: During the 2017-18 school year, how satisfied have you been with the instruction your student has received in:

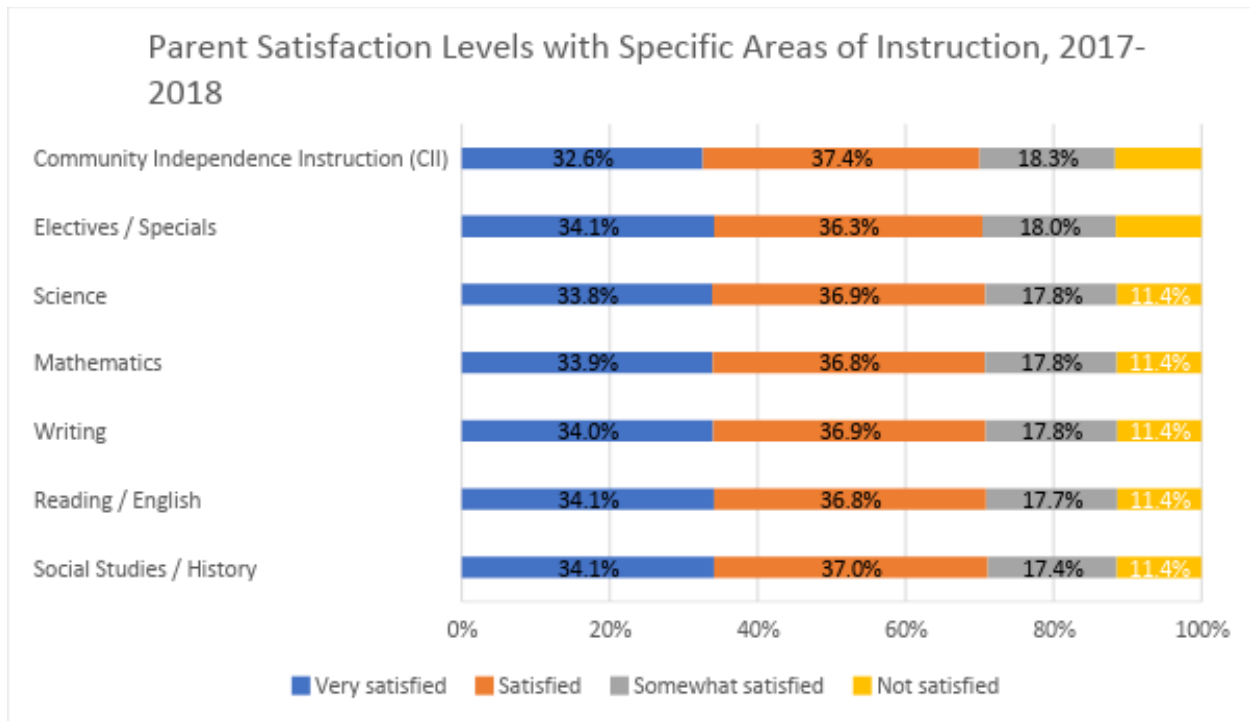


Exhibit reads: 32.6% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the Community Independence Instruction (CII) their student received during the 2017-2018 school year.

88-89% of parents were "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" with the instruction their student received (in: reading/English, math, writing, social studies/history, science, electives/specials, and community independence instruction).

INFORMS/INVOLVES PARENTS

Table 4:

Survey Question: My school keeps me informed and/or helps me have an active role in my child's education in the following ways.

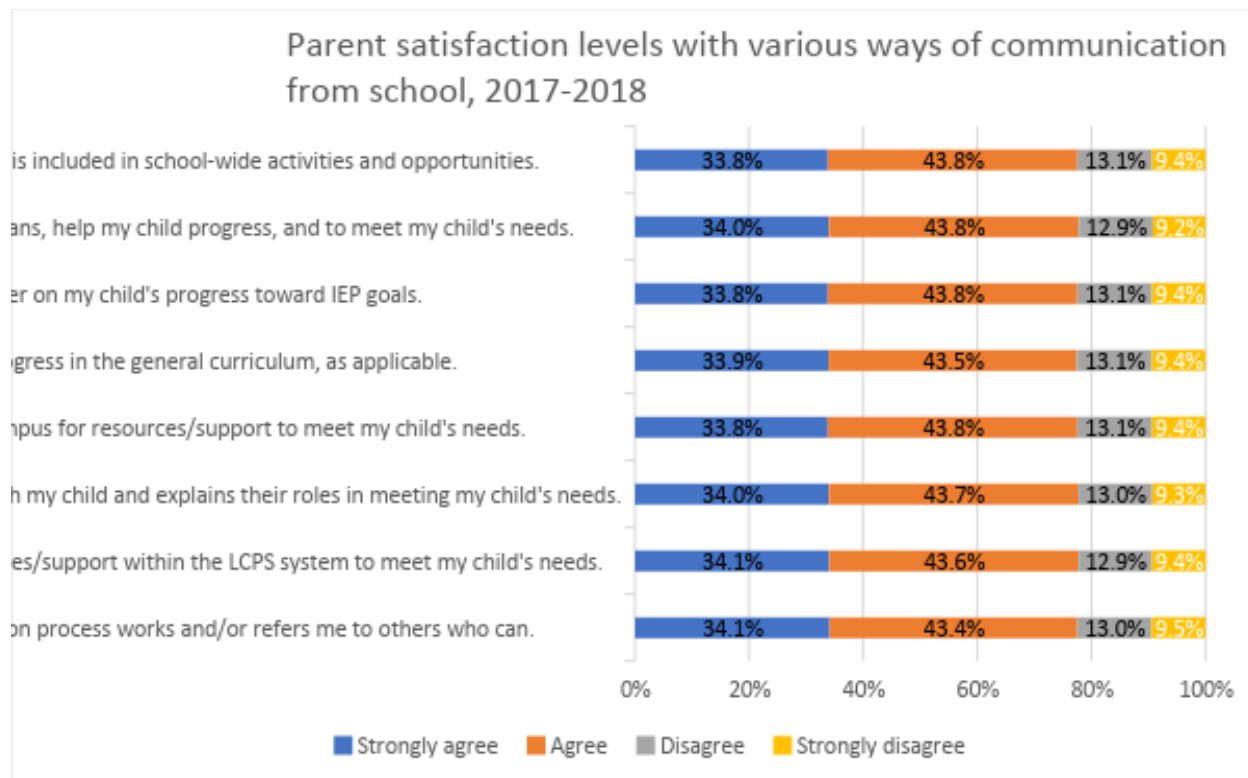


Exhibit reads: 33.8% of respondents strongly agreed that their child's school keeps them informed of ways in which their child is included in school-wide activities and opportunities.

About 75% of parents felt their school keeps them informed and helps them to play an active role in their child's education (introduction to personnel and roles for those working with the student, helps parents know where to go on campus for resources/needs, identifies/directs to LCPS for additional resources/needs, helps parent understand how the special education process works, keeps parents updated in timely manner regarding IEP progress, regularly solicits and uses parent input to craft IEPs, keeps parents informed of ways student is involved in school-wide activities, and keeps parents updated of child's progress in the general curriculum).

COMMUNICATION

Table 5:

Survey Question: With regard to communication and/or support at the division level, please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following:

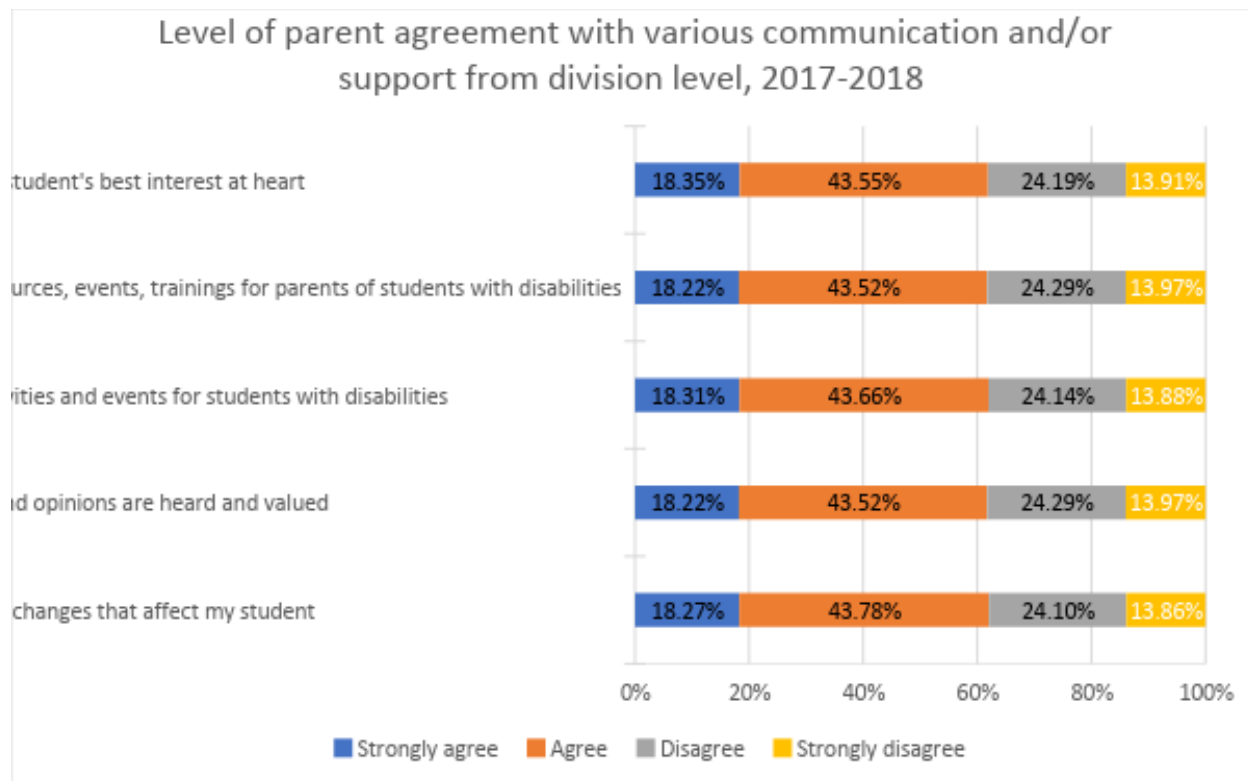


Exhibit reads: 18.35% of parents strongly agreed that the administration of LCPS has their student's best interest at heart.

Only about 60% of parents agreed that communication and support from the district met their needs (keeps me informed of policy/program changes that affect their student, makes parent feel as though concerns/opinions are heard and valued, keeps parents informed of division-wide events/activities for SPED students, keeps parents informed of division-wide events/resources/training for parents of SPED students, and that the administration and LCPS has their student's best interest at heart.)

THERAPIES/RELATED SERVICES

Table 6:

Survey Question: In the 2017-2018 school year, how satisfied were you with the related services your student received in:

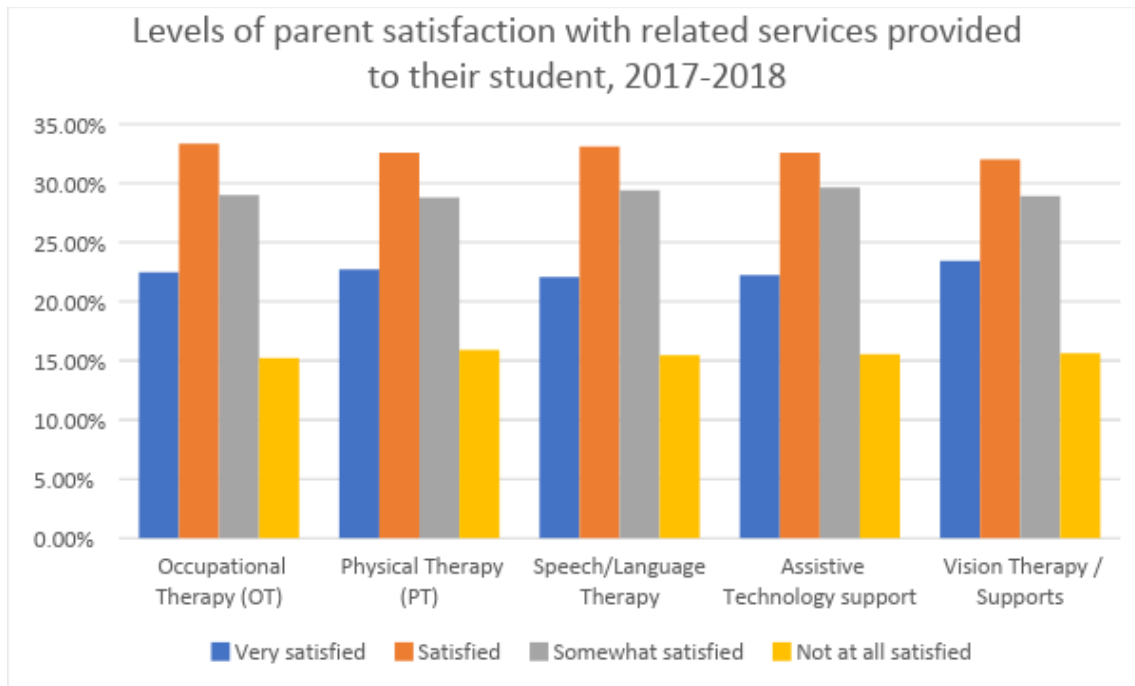


Exhibit reads: 22% of parents reported being very satisfied with the occupational therapy related services their student received in the 2017-18 school year.

About 85% of parents were "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" with the therapy services their child received (OT, PT, Speech/Language, AT, and Vision).

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Table 7:

Survey Question: As a parent, do you feel that you have access to resources that help you navigate the school system and support your student?

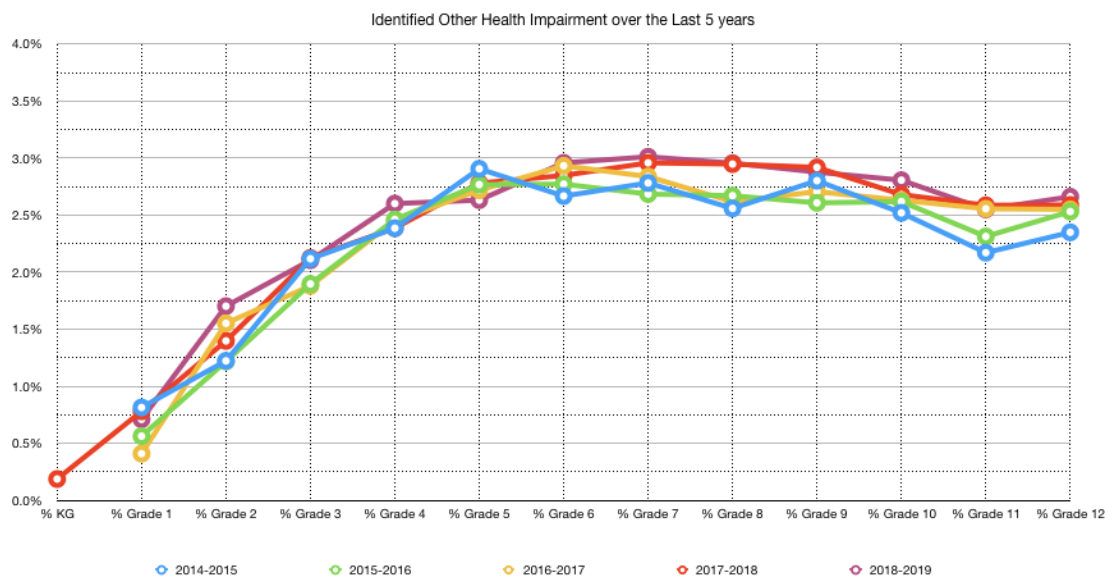
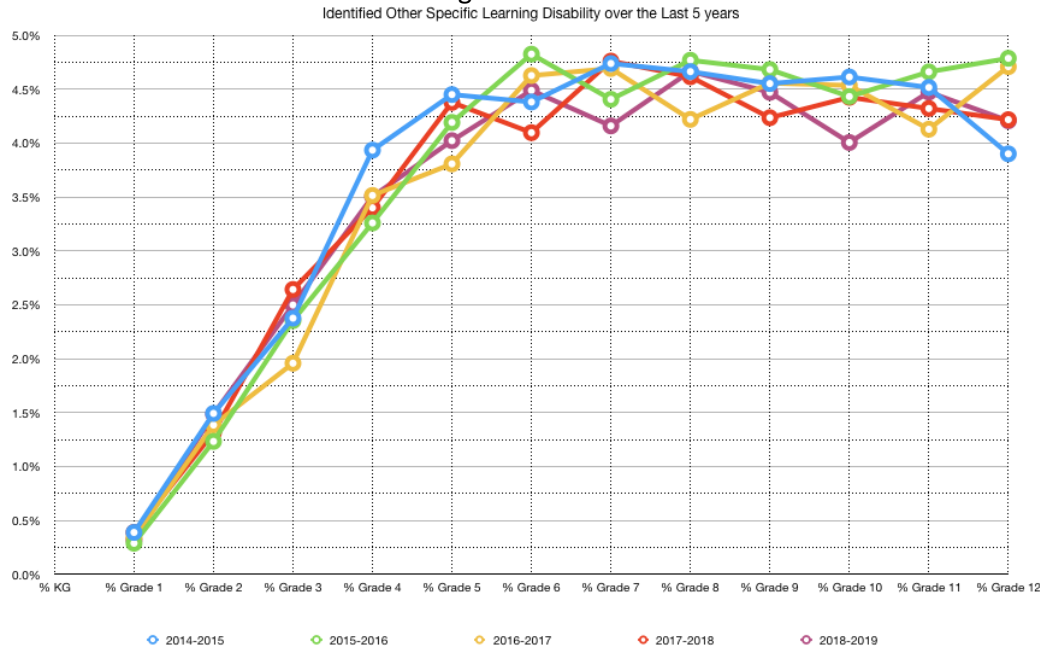
As a parent, do you feel that you have access to resources that help you navigate the school system and support your student?		
Row Labels	resources that help	Count
Yes	57.40%	318
No	36.64%	203
Access to teachers; not to outside or county wide programs or referrals	0.18%	1
At this point, I am not sure yet. More inclined to say no.	0.18%	1
I am moving my child to a private school so she can get the help she needs. Isn't that what you w	0.18%	1
I can and do, but I am often left wondering where to start and who to talk to.	0.18%	1
I don't feel the school system has what it needs to provide the support.	0.18%	1
I don't know what resources would help navigate the system. I'm sure there are other people who a	0.18%	1
I feel like there could be more.	0.18%	1
I found things outside of lcps	0.18%	1
I HAVE AN ADVOCATE.	0.18%	1
I have been fortunate enough to work with an advocate and she has helped us navigate this proces	0.18%	1
I used to via the Parent Resource Services Department, but unfortunately, this year the new educa	0.18%	1
If it suits them to provide	0.18%	1
I'm not sure.	0.18%	1
In a way- I can look it up online	0.18%	1
Information is not readily available. The parent must do a lot of investigating to obtain info about pr	0.18%	1
It's not always clear what those are	0.18%	1
Kind of. Not yes or no	0.18%	1
Not always sure what to ask for. So probably missing out on services.	0.18%	1
Not many resources available for transition	0.18%	1
Not really, the basic referral to the school website.	0.18%	1
Not really. The child Study team does an excellent job of explaining each step, but when your chi	0.18%	1
Now I do. It took two years, but Leesburg Elementary School has made a HUGE difference in our	0.18%	1
Only when I ask	0.18%	1
Only when I ask for help. These are not always easy to find.	0.18%	1
Sometimes	0.18%	1
Sometimes you have to work harder than you should go get info	0.18%	1
Somewhat	0.36%	2
sort of	0.18%	1
Sort of. The school has been helpful but it would be nice to have more online resources.	0.18%	1
websites need to provide direct information instead of redirecting one in the hopes that eventually y	0.18%	1
Yes, but only because I am familiar with the Admin staff. A parent who didn't know anyone outside	0.18%	1
You register for a school but are not informed what resources you have access to especially with :	0.18%	1
(blank)	0.00%	14
Grand Total	100.00%	568

Only about 60% of parents felt they had access to resources that helped them to navigate the system to support their student.

The Need for Early Reading Intervention

Table 8: LCPS identification of students with Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment graphed over the last 5 years, it does not appear LCPS is identifying students until 5th, 6th, or even 7th grade. The following issues or a combination of all three should be closely considered:

1. The screeners that LCPS is using are not identifying student early enough; or
2. The screeners are identifying students and the tier 2 and tier 3 instruction is not appropriate; or
3. The tier one instruction does not incorporate ECORI. Therefore, the poor tier 1 instruction is affecting the students over time.



Appendix 2

2018 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

With responses provided in 09/30/2019 in red from the Special Education Office

Area of Need/Concern 1: Policies, Practices and Procedures

One of SEAC's mandated roles per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (#5) is to *"review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board."* However, SEAC has not been provided with the opportunity to either proactively or retroactively review any proposed or ongoing special education policies or practices until recently (September 2018) when SEAC asked to review the same policies, practices, and regulations that were provided to the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Education for their review. Given that policy/practice review is a core function of SEAC, SEAC asks to be included in the workflow for all relevant reviews moving forward.

Recommendation 1A: Establish and use a workflow to introduce and provide SEAC with special education policies, practices, and procedures that are new, require periodic review, or revised to enable SEAC to complete a thorough review in a reasonable timeframe (given that SEAC meets monthly) and provide input prior to submission to the school board.

LCPS is currently involved in a 5-year cyclical review of all policies. During the 2018-19 school year, LCPS reviewed a number of policies and procedures that were related to the provision of special education services. In general, the policies related to special education services had not been reviewed since 2009. Hence, for each respective policy under review, staff presented the policy revisions/recommendations to the SEAC membership during a SEAC monthly meeting, and answered any questions raised by SEAC membership. SEAC was given two months to review the draft policy, make any recommendations for staff consideration, and facilitate SEAC membership vote on any SEAC policy subcommittee recommendations.

During the 2018-19 school year, staff also presented and accepted feedback on the newly developed procedures for classroom observations conducted by service providers/professionals to the SEAC membership. Additionally, a new crisis management tool, Ukeru was introduced to assist staff with managing physically

aggressive student behavior. Staff arranged for the Ukeru developer and trainer to attend a SEAC membership meeting to explain the technique as well as answer any questions from SEAC membership.

Recommendation 1B: Restraint and Seclusion – Engage in a comprehensive review of restraint and seclusion policies and practices with LCPS, incident data (that includes antecedents, tracking the duration of restraint and/or seclusion, recovery time and reintegration into the classroom or school setting after each episode for each student), to determine any trends regarding elevated use in particular schools, by particular staff teams, within particular programs, and other data points that can illuminate prevalence (all with identifying information for students and staff concealed).

LCPS Policy 5345 Restraint and Seclusion of Students and corresponding Regulation 5345 were developed and approved in January 2019.

Restraint and Seclusion incident reports are reviewed by on a weekly basis by the Office of Special Education. Follow up discussions are scheduled with school staff as deemed necessary. The school staff must convene to discuss student needs within two school days following an incident of a restraint or seclusion. The emergency procedure review report has been revised to ensure detailed information is documented for review as well. Additional training is provided to staff as deemed necessary by the school administration and/or Office of Special Education.

- i. Provide regular reports to SEAC (that conceal identifying information) regarding restraint and seclusion incidences to allow SEAC to monitor the issue and develop further recommendations throughout the year.

Policy 5345 Restraint and Seclusion of Students requires the public annual reporting of the total number of physical restraint and seclusion instances as reported by schools, and information regarding employee training. In September 2019, staff provided the school board an annual report for the 2018-19 school year (to include ESY) as an information item. Staff has requested and is scheduled to share the annual report during the October 2019 SEAC meeting.

Recommendation 1C: Student Observations – Reexamine the rationale and communication regarding the new practice of disallowing outside professionals to observe students with disabilities in the classroom and school setting, and

consider establishing consistent protocol across the division for requesting, approving and facilitating appropriate observations that can lead to improvements for students with disabilities in accessing the curriculum, developing coping skills to manage behaviors and strengthen the parent/community/school partnership.

In Spring 2019, LCPS developed guidelines for observations by private service providers/professionals. The development of this process involved presentations and feedback from the SEAC membership and the ad hoc committee for special education. Consistent with 8VAC20-81-110 C.1.f., LCPS has consistently afforded parents the opportunity to include private practitioners at IEP team meetings. Additionally, recommended procedures have been established and reinforced at schools to include conferences offered to parents and their private providers to discuss student needs; and for sharing of information, consultation and collaboration.

Area of Need/Concern 2: Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness and integrative supports, appropriate use of reinforcement and discipline, organization and time management skills, self-advocacy coaching, developing strong work and study habits, and test preparation are consistently high areas of need within the special education population.

Recommendation 2A: Social Skills - Implement a social skills curriculum that is delivered to identified students with disabilities throughout the duration of the school year to develop self-awareness and competencies in relational skills, increase interpersonal confidence and success, establish and maintain friendships, and learn how to appropriately navigate conflict and interact productively with different personality styles.

The Social Thinking curriculum is implemented in several schools as well as with individual students as deemed necessary by the educational experts working with students with disabilities. For the 2019-2020 school year, LCPS adopted the use of Second Step curriculum to expand universal social-emotional learning (SEL) practices to promote behavioral and mental health and wellness and student safety interventions for students. Members from the SEAC Executive Functioning and

Social Emotional Learning subcommittee along with teachers, administrators, and members of the gifted advisory composed the team that reviewed responses to the LCPS Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify the best SEL curriculum for purchase.

Recommendation 2B: Executive Functioning - Provide a comprehensive program to support the age-appropriate development of executive functioning skills for students with disabilities to include (but not be limited to) organizational skills, time management, planning and chunking assignments to meet deadlines, effective work and study habits (i.e. note-taking and techniques for studying), test preparation strategies, and stress management.

Staff to include teachers and school counselors offer a variety of accommodations, modifications and services to address executive functioning to include, but not limited to, counseling services to address anxiety, various methodologies to teach needed skills, and other approaches to learning. A multi-tiered system of supports approach is used across all LCPS schools to provide universal, intensive, and targeted support based upon student needs. Ongoing professional learning is provided to teachers and staff to support this process.

Recommendation 2C: Mental Health - Develop accessible and relatable supports for preventing, identifying, managing, and decreasing stressors and the resultant anxiety and depression as it is manifested in students with disabilities.

LCPS provides services and accommodations as deemed necessary by the IEP team. This can include counseling as a related service, group counseling opportunities, various methodologies to teach needed skills to manage stress, anxiety, etc. The school division staff do not serve in the capacity of mental health practitioners; however, staff provide supports needed to afford students access to the educational environment. Additionally, LCPS staff, when given parental consent, often collaborate with private practitioners who are working with students outside the school day in order to reinforce skills and as appropriate.

All schools have a Pupil Services Student Support Team (PSSST) that meets biweekly. This problem-solving team discusses student needs and determines appropriate mental health and behavioral services and supports. These supports are established Tier 1, 2 and 3 schoolwide universal, targeted, and intensive as needed to address student needs.

Recommendation 2D: Mental Health - Develop and provide graduated levels of staff training in the risk factors, warning signs, and appropriate school-based interventions for mental health concerns that are exhibited in K-12 students with disabilities.

- i. All staff who work directly with students with disabilities should be trained to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns, and quickly respond with appropriate interventions to the most prevalent mental health struggles adolescents experience, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicidal ideation
- ii. Provide training to all staff who work with students with disabilities about the different ways common mental health issues can present differently in students with disabilities.
- iii. Report statistics on the percentage of special education teachers, general education staff who teach in inclusive classrooms, school principals, assistant principals, and deans who have completed the baseline mental health training.
- iv. Determine performance standards and measures the impact that mental health staff training has affected or changed the quality of the programs and services offered at all the schools.

School faculty at all high schools received gatekeeper training from the SOS Signs of Suicide Training Trusted Adults program to educate them on the warning signs and risk factors of suicide and depression and how to effectively respond. A parent/guardian gatekeeper training from the SOS Signs of Suicide Training Trusted Adults program was offered at each high school to educate parents on the warning signs and risk factors of suicide and depression and how to effectively respond.

Middle school teachers were provided access to Kognito: At-Risk for Middle School Educators training, a web-based interactive role-play simulation for middle school educators that builds awareness, knowledge, and skills about mental health and suicide prevention, and prepares users to lead real-life conversations with students that build resilience, strengthen relationships, and connect them with support. Student Assistance Specialists provide a Substance Use Trends presentation each year for all staff to attend.

Student Assistance Specialists also offer school-based professional development to teachers and unified mental health teams regarding substance use trends and available services.

LCPS continues to provide mental health professionals (school counselors, social workers, psychologists) well beyond the Virginia Standards of Quality requirements. These professionals provide ongoing universal and targeted support to engage students, inform teacher practices, as well as partner with community mental health agencies and providers.

Recommendation 2E: Mental Health – Ensure that parents, students and all of the necessary school-based staff are fully aware of the Return-to-Learn initiative and receive training and opportunities for conferencing to confirm their understanding and ability to execute the Return-to-Learn protocol.

A Return to Learn web page for parents was created within the School Mental Health Services section of the LCPS website <https://www.lcps.org/Page/200743>. All homebound assistant principal contacts at the elementary, middle and high school levels were trained on the implementation of the Return to Learn protocol and the dissemination of this information to parents in September 2019 during targeted training on homebound instruction processes and procedures specifically for school administrators. Training participants were also provided with copies of the “Return to Learn” brochure to disseminate to parents and guardians. Training is provided annually and also provided to the Unified Mental Health Teams.

Recommendation 2F: Mental Health – Address stigma associated with mental health issues as part of the health curriculum across K-12 and provide contacts and resources for seeking help or reporting when there is concern about a peer.

LCPS has significantly improved mental health staff support at all levels with the provision of 26 additional elementary school counselors, as well as enhanced staffing of school social workers and psychologists. These individuals are trained to connect with students and teachers to promote healthy choices in developmentally appropriate ways. Prevention programs such as Positive Experiences in Educational Relationships (PEER), Sources of Strength and SOS Signs of Suicide are prevention programs that provide education to secondary students. The program goals include encouraging help-seeking and connect students at risk with trusted adults and reducing stigma around mental health stigma among youth.

September is Suicide Prevention Month and is recognized annually through a school board proclamation. This proclamation is communicated widely and informs the community about existing LCPS partnerships with professional organizations and community agencies, such as A Place to Be, the Ryan Bartel Foundation, Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia, and the Loudoun County Department of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services. Additionally, Parent Resource Services (PRS) works to engage parents as partners in effective prevention

through the sharing of resources and providing education through the Mental Health and Wellness Parent Seminar Series.

Recommendation 2G: Mental Health - Increase mental health staff support for K-12 by adding qualified, licensed mental health professionals that meet recommendations from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) for a maximum student-to school psychologist ratio of 1,000 to 1 for the general population, and increase the staffing levels for school psychologists providing comprehensive and preventative services recommended by NASP for a ratio not to exceed 500-700 students per psychologist.

- i. Implement a mental health prevention and intervention program for the elementary schools.

LCPS has significantly improved mental health staff support at all levels with the provision of 26 additional elementary school counselors, as well as enhanced staffing of school social workers and psychologists. All high schools and middle schools have a full-time school psychologists and school social worker. The staffing ratio for elementary school is 2,000 to 1 for school psychologists and for school social workers. An enhancement for elementary Title I schools increased school social workers to include 1 per two schools.

In the first year of a three-year initiative, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum is being implemented in 33 schools at various grade levels to promote student skill development in the areas of social awareness, self-awareness, self-regulation, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. The Second Step program from the Committee for Children was selected as LCPS's SEL curriculum through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that included various stakeholders to include the gifted community and SEAC.

Recommendation 2H: Behavioral and Emotional Support - Providing training for all special and general education staff who work with students with disabilities in de-escalation strategies to manage behavior and provide appropriate emotional support during stressful and tense situations, when students are feeling uncomfortable or withdrawn, or when students are in crisis.

Trauma informed approaches to verbally deescalate students during moments of crisis behaviors are utilized through MANDT and Ukeru relational skills training. LCPS has established Lead MANDT trainers in all schools so staff and school-based teams can be trained as administrators deem necessary. When students are "in crisis" they should be supported by properly trained staff (counselors, psychologists, social workers, and identified SPED staff). Special Education staff provide training to

staff regarding the individual needs of students with disabilities.

Ukeru training took place in the SY18-19 school year. As of 9/17/19, 516 staff members, Behavior Intervention Teams (BIT) members, and staff in self-contained and intensive programs participated in this training.

Additional training for universal and targeted supports using the PBIS framework and classroom systems have also been provided to better equip staff to support students.

- i. Support staff in contacting parents as soon as possible, and within policy timeframes after an incident occurs, including how to sensitively and compassionately communicate with parents and others (as needed) about the situation.

The facilitated IEP training/coaching model has been established. Supervisors, designees, and Pupil Services Staff have participated in trainings to increase their skills to handle conflicts as they arise. The training provides a collaborative and communicative approach where the relationships of teams are maintained. These trainings were developed in conjunction with GMU School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Policy and regulation 5345 Restraint and Seclusion of Students addressed the requirement for parent notification when emergency measures are utilized to address a student in crisis.

- ii. Educate staff and the special education community about restorative language and practices, emphasizing the premise that both staff and students can harm the relationship (i.e. to correct the misperception that restorative practices are used when a student only has caused harm, since staff and the approaches they use can also contribute to broken, harmful relationships.)

Proactive measures involving support from mental health teams, classroom structures, and other student support programming is used to build and promote safe student behaviors. Intensive supports through MANDT relational and Ukeru training is provided to staff with an emphasis on trauma-informed care for students and others.

Restorative Language and Circles Trainings and Restorative Conference Trainings are open to all staff throughout the year. Many special education staff have completed these certifications. Work is underway to increase the number of certified staff members in Restorative Practice (RP) Language and

Circles.

- iii. Provide teachers with access to behavior specialists to train and guide them on how to address severe student behaviors.

Six Specialized Instructional Facilitators for Behavior (SIF-B) positions were developed and newly hired to begin the 2019-20 school year. The SIF-Bs are regionally placed and support teachers on how to address severe student behaviors. Each SIF-B also has a BCBA certification and has expertise to assist teachers and school teams with behavior analysis, data collection, intervention planning and implementation.

Special Education consulting teachers, specialists and specialized instructional facilitators support teachers/school staff on an as needed basis to address student and staff needs. Teachers who support students with the more unique and intense behaviors are provided with an additional 3-day professional development institute prior to the beginning of the school year.

Recommendation 2I: ADD/ADHD - Because ADD and ADHD are common struggles for students across disability categories, the symptoms need to be acknowledged as part of a legitimate health impairment/disability and properly addressed by staff across different campus and classroom settings.

- i. Provide training to staff in recognizing that issues involving discipline, motivation, lack of self-control, fidgeting, the need to continuously move one's body, frequent distraction, and an inability to focus (on rote assignments, for example) are not conscious decisions made by students to avoid work or act out, but rather a manifestation of a legitimate health condition.
- ii. Provide training to staff in supporting students by demonstrating understanding and compassion towards the student, helping the student develop strategies to combat the various manifestations of ADD/ADHD, as well as refraining from interacting with or correcting students in a way that contributes to a poor self- image, withdrawal, and peer rejection.

Training is provided to staff based upon individual needs of students. The Office of Special Education provides additional professional development to schools as requested by school administration or deemed necessary. Parent Resource Services (PRS) is also used to provide information to parents on this topic.

Area of Need/Concern 3: Specialized Programs and Services

Providing speech therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology, music therapy, career and transition services, twice exceptional programs, specialized reading instruction, and intensive autism and behavior programs are critical to the success of students with disabilities. Concerns are consistently expressed regarding the availability and access, frequency, regularity, and fidelity in/of which these programs and services are delivered.

Recommendation 3A: Career/Transition - Hire one FTE dedicated Transition Supervisor to replace the current model for this position (which is for the employee to serve both as a special education supervisor for a cluster and as the transition supervisor).

Career and Transition programming is currently supported by two specialists that work collaboratively with a special education supervisor. In addition to overseeing transition services, this special education supervisor is responsible for providing support to a cluster of schools.

- i. Expand transition programs by asking staff to engage in more community outreach to establish new CII programs in more rural areas with employers that are typical for the area (such as wineries) and which parents support.

There has been ongoing and continual expansion of business partnerships in all areas of the county, to include rural areas, through the transition teachers and case managers at the school level. There are approximately 250 businesses that support the CAST (Community and Schools Together) and CII programs throughout Loudoun County. A brief example of the broad spectrum of businesses who partner with us are; landscaping companies, grocery stores, technology and business firms, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, automotive businesses and farms. County agencies such as parks, recreation and community services, the libraries, as well as public safety agencies such as law enforcement and fire and rescue. Students are provided invaluable workplace experiences of; job exploration, job shadowing, mentoring, unpaid and paid internships and paid employment opportunities.

Recommendation 3B: Career/Transition - Hire 1 FTE Community Independence Instruction (CII) Coordinator to address the longstanding need for more staffing to support student transitions and post-high school career options.

We currently do not have a CII Coordinator, as the transition team (supervisor and two specialists) support CII programs. Staff is in the process of reviewing data to support a budget recommendation related to post-graduate and CII programming. Currently, a transition teacher and a job coach are on staff in each Loudoun County high school to assist students with disabilities and their families in planning and preparing for life after high school. The transition teacher works with each student's case manager and other staff to assess student employment related interests, aptitudes and abilities, and to help students and their families get connected with community agencies and other helpful resources.

Recommendation 3C: Career/Transition - Provide funding to contract with a transit service provider to use smaller buses or vans to provide more flexible transportation for Community Independence Instruction programs that only allow 6 students at a time.

The LCPS Transportation Department works very collaboratively with the Office of Special Education for all transportation matters. There is required planning, organization, justification and approval required for all CII requests which include timelines for requesting transportation.

Career and Transition Services has worked with the county's public transit providers to train students and staff in schools to utilize public transit services to provide more flexible transportation for CII. The protocol to request transportation requires that the trip is planned by no less than ten days, so transportation can coordinate their efforts. Any transportation options aside from public transit must be provided through the department of transportation/support services.

Recommendation 3D: Job Training –Provide a path through Monroe Advanced Technology Academy in the Academies of Loudoun for students with disabilities to participate and gain skills without the need to obtain licensure or certification.

Students with disabilities currently attend MATA and receive support in accordance to their IEP programming. Career and Transition supports additional work-based training and educational opportunities for student with disabilities at MATA and AOL. There have been ongoing discussions between the director of the Department of Special Education and Department of Instruction for the past few years. Career and Transition continues to work with students in the schools and in the community to help them gain needed skills. We have programming in place to assist students in learning towards obtaining various certifications.

Recommendation 3E: Job Training - Provide an option to receive specific vocational training (i.e. culinary arts, auto repair) at specific high schools for students who do not qualify for AOL/MATA and need life skills training and a distributed vocational model.

Recommendation 3F: Assistive Technology – Conduct timely evaluations and provide the appropriate assistive technology accommodations, including accessible materials, that permit all students with disabilities to access the appropriate curriculum level in all grades (K-12).

Assistive Technology (AT) evaluations are completed within the required timelines set forth in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia. The IEP team reviews the AT evaluation report and determines the required accommodations, if any, that are necessary for the student to access the curriculum.

The Specialized Instructional Facilitators – Assistive Technology (SIF-AT) have been provided with training on completing evaluations within expected timelines as well as attending the IEP meeting to review their report and discuss the recommendations.

Additionally, in an effort to build capacity and consistency, the Specialized Instructional Facilitators - Assistive Technology developed a Resource Consideration Guide which helps teams determine least restrictive resources for implementation. Specialized Instructional Facilitators - Assistive Technology facilitate the process of reviewing the Resource Consideration Guide with teams.

- i. Prioritize providing Chromebooks to students with IEPs, 504s or receiving interventions in order to use the reading support programs. A student should not have to wait to access curriculum until a Chromebook becomes available.

The Chromebook device initiative is being implemented by the Department of Digital Innovation (DDI). Assistive Technology has collaborated with DDI about this specific concern. Assistive Technology now has the ability to request a Chromebook for students with disabilities not yet included in the initiative who require devices in order to access the accommodations on their IEP.

Schools which have not yet been provided with Chromebooks as part of the 1:1 initiative can also continue to utilize existing supports such as laptops.

- ii. Regularly provide access to the curriculum through AT and regular training on use of AT. Students use voice to text, Learning Ally, RWG, One note, and other AT. These all need to be used on regular basis and not tried “one time and done.”

Over the past year, AT has continued to shift focus from an expert model to a collaborative/coaching model. Training, coaching, and modeling are the cornerstone of the SIF-ATs roles and responsibilities. Although different in their purposes, all focus on expanding capacity to increase school-based staff’s knowledge, consideration, and implementation of AT with fidelity.

Training

Individually or collaboratively, the SIF-AT works to design an experience where participants efficiently and effectively learn content and/or develop a new skill. Training to school-based staff is typically more general in nature. The information provided can be utilized by staff for any student. Examples of topics of trainings for school staff include but are not limited to: Universal Design for Learning, strategies for how to make materials accessible, design aspects of communication systems, awareness and use of tools that are available throughout the division, etc. SIF-ATs are responsible for collaborating with administration, teachers, therapists, support staff, and IFTs to develop an understanding of the needs of each assigned school, and to schedule, develop, and deliver training based on these needs.

Coaching

Job embedded coaching is driven by questions addressed to the coachee to learn a new skill, who then explores what they already know, in a way that would probably not occur to them without the guidance of the coach.

Modeling

To ensure the effective use of assistive technology, SIF-ATs may also model lessons within classrooms on how to implement and embed AT in the classroom throughout the day. An assistive technology training component was added to the special education new teacher course during the 2018-2019 school year.

Since February, the Specialized Instructional Facilitators - Assistive Technology and the Assistive Technology Specialist review software submitted through the county's software review process to provide input on the accessibility of titles being considered.

Recommendation 3G: Autism Support – Improve and provide regular training in instructional methods and behavioral techniques for teachers and substitutes for students with Autism.

The Office for Special Education (OSS) has a partnership with the VCU Autism Center for Excellence and is in the process of developing training designed for administrators on Autism. It is anticipated the training will be available beginning Winter 2019. Annual and ongoing training is provided to transportation teams that support students with autism. While ongoing support is provided to school-based teams when there is a need for a substitute employee. Currently in the budget development phase, the OSS has plans to request funding to support training with Human Resources and Talent Development for training specifically for substitutes.

- i. With the demand for high skill levels and expertise in working with students with Autism, an ongoing professional development curriculum should be implemented that involves school-based administrators, principals, vice principals, deans, general and special education teachers, school psychologists, speech therapists, school counselors, teaching assistants, and related services personnel to increase competence and efficacy in serving the needs of these students.
- ii. Develop and implement a training curriculum on working with students with disabilities for substitute teachers before they are eligible to substitute in special education classrooms. This training should include identifying behaviors that are manifestations of a child's disability and how to support and intervene when these behaviors are exhibited.
- iii. As the VCU grant is used to help support the Autism Services team in developing a training program for all administrative staff and teachers, consideration should be given to how the training will translate into improved autism programs and supports in easily identifiable and measurable ways.
- iv. Develop programs and guidelines that address the unique needs of students with high-functioning autism who are typically integrated into the general education classrooms.

Ongoing collaboration and development of training in the 2019-2020 school year as provided above.

Recommendation 3H: Visual impairments – Address the teacher shortage by hiring staff with the proper expertise to work with visually impaired students, provide more training to staff who currently teach visually impaired students, and incentivize qualified teachers to teach visually impaired students.

During the 2018-19 school year, two additional itinerant teachers of the Blind/Visually Impaired positions were approved. One of the positions has been filled; however, the second position remains vacant and recruitment efforts are in place for highly qualified candidates. During the 2018-2019 school year, the Office of Special Education partnered with the Department of HRTD to increase recruitment efforts for all special education positions. This included information sessions, a virtual job fair, increased SPED administrators at county-wide job fairs and partnerships with universities.

Recommendation 3I: Twice exceptional students – Students with disabilities who are also gifted or high achievers need to be provided with the supports and services needed to accommodate their disability **and** placed in classes and academic programs that are commensurate with their level of intelligence and academic abilities.

- i. Provide appropriate screenings with the necessary accommodations for students with disabilities to determine areas of academic strength or giftedness to identify twice exceptional students.
- ii. Provide the accommodations, services and supports necessary to twice exceptional students to allow them to fully access the appropriate level curriculum and programs, such as those within the Academies of Loudoun.
- iii. Deliver training to special and general education teachers to recognize signs that a student might be twice exceptional and process for referring these students for further consideration of appropriate supports to help students already in gifted programs to more fully benefit from the range of learning opportunities available, or to help special education students be supported in a manner that permits them to participate in gifted and other advanced academic programs.

OSS staff continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Instruction to address the instructional and social emotional needs of all students. A recent example includes the selection of the elementary SEL curriculum which was selected with the

needs of twice exceptional students in mind.

Recommendation 3J: Dyslexia Screenings – If the PALS assessment will continue to be used in K-2nd grades as the universal screener for dyslexia, additional curriculum-based measures (such as those listed in the dyslexia subcommittee’s full report) are recommended to screen those students not able to meet the PALS benchmark.

The Office of Special Education continues to encourage the use of Curriculum-based Measures of early literacy skills, which include automaticity. For Kindergarten: letter name, letter sound, non-sense words, decodable words and sight words are all subtests in a comprehensive screener available to LCPS schools through the FastBridge Suite. This option is available in addition to and not instead of PALS.

- i. Early screening should include consideration for early language impairment, as well as family history of dyslexia.
- ii. Provide information on how the guidance documents for RTI teams have been developed, distributed to building administrators to guide schools through the screening to intervention process, and which schools have implemented the process.

This guidance is published in the Division’s Implementation Guidance Document for Response to Intervention, as well as supported through professional learning and coaching of the Specialized Instructional Facilitators-Reading.

Recommendation 3K: MAP for dyslexia – If MAP is used as a universal screener, ensure the teachers understand how to interpret the sub scores.

SY 2018-2019 MAP Team Training consisted of ensuring that teachers understand how to interpret the sub scores. The data gained from each type of report were reviewed in depth. Schools were asked to send teams of teachers to the training to use the “train the trainer” model to build capacity in each school. Facilitator positions in the Department of Instruction (DOI) and Pupil Services also supported the understanding of data during Data Collaborative Learning Team Meetings within schools. Ongoing data reviews and support are provided through the collaborative efforts of the DOI and pupil services.

- i. Provide MAP overview for parents. What is it?, How to read it?, What does it mean? This overview should explain to parents how to understand the

scores, rather than simply giving the score and told they are meeting expectations, are performing below expectations, or are performing above expectations. How should the information be used? Does it tell us specifically where the student is struggling?

The Division MAP Team, which has representation from the Office of Special Education, has developed additional parent resources and made percentiles available in Parent Vue, instead of only the raw scores, previously reported. Learning sessions on MAP for Parents are scheduled for the Fall of 2019.

- ii. If MAP is used as a universal screener, administrators of the screener need to make appropriate accommodation decisions based on what skill is being measured. For example, if the goal is to measure vocabulary knowledge, grammar skills, comprehension and language art skills, then these skills may be artificially impacted without a read aloud accommodation, thereby producing poor data collection and intervention design. If one is measuring decoding, encoding, accuracy and fluency, then an accurate measurement would not require a read aloud accommodation.

To reduce potential of false-positives for students with dyslexia who receive the read aloud accommodation, specific guidance was written into the division's assessment guidelines that specifies students who receive the read aloud on the MAP Reading/Language per their IEP, should receive FAST as a secondary screener.

- iii. Monitor for false negatives. Recognize that while Computer Adaptive Tests (CAT) like MAP, iReady, and STAR may be used as screening measures for SLD/Dyslexia, these assessments concurrently (simultaneously) measure a number of components of reading skills and result in false negative results. Consider the implications of the difficulty in isolating the component areas of reading that are measured in these assessments. Even if a student is flagged, utilize further testing to determine which specific skill area demonstrated a weakness. (MM) <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/SLD-Dyslexia-Assessment-Resource-Guide/Introduction>

The LCPS MTSS-RTI Guidance document specifies that several data sources should be used to guide decision-making regarding the intensity of intervention

required. MAP is one source that must be triangulated with others, per this guidance.

- iv. Provide progress monitoring for students transitioning out of an intensive reading program. Address methods to prevent a student from regressing, along with what is going to be used and how.

Strategic progress monitoring of students between the 30th and 40th percentiles (Tier 2) is recommended through the LCPS MTSS-RTI Manual. This would be a recommended practice until the student has attained the 40th percentile or above. Once above the 40th percentile, monitoring of progress using classroom data sources and differentiation continue as a practice within core instruction.

Area of Need/Concern 4: Culture and Climate

A pervasive concern relates to a lack of transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams, and communication. These foundational principles should be the uncompromising expectation for productive relationships between LCPS and parents of/students receiving special education students.

Recommendation 4A: Transitions between levels – Develop and implement procedures and guidelines to facilitate smooth, individualized transitions for students between school levels to ensure continuity of services, successful inclusion, early development of trusting relationships, open communication, and the maintenance of student progress.

Representatives from the receiving school attend transition IEP meetings and support the IEP development as it relates to the structures in place at the student's new school. At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, the Office of Special Education transitioned to a cluster-based model for Supervisor assignments to facilitate more effective and efficient transitions between schools as transitions occur between elementary, middle and high schools within the cluster. Hence, the supervisor becomes very familiar with the students, families, and schools to support the transition process.

Recommendation 4B: Communication and collaboration - Improve parent and staff awareness of policies, procedures, regulations and resources by:

- i. Engage school-based administration in appointing a SEAC PTA/PTO Parent Representative to enhance communication within the special education community.
- ii. Set firm expectations for school-based administrators to proactively provide parents of students with disabilities with key information including contacts at the school level, the variety of resources, services and supports available at the school and within the district to meet student needs, the roles and responsibilities of case managers and special education teachers, routes for addressing concerns with processes, programs, staff or services, and/or school-based protocols, etc.
- iii. Reviewing performance indicators for parental involvement at the school level and increasing regular and meaningful communication in preferred formats to improve collaboration and positive student outcomes.

Improved communication and collaboration have been areas of focus for the OSS. Partnering with SEAC, information for SEAC PTA/PTO involvement was shared with principals and reminders were also provided. The special education supervisors have been and continue to serve as a liaison between schools and parents as needed.

The OSS staff worked closely with the ad hoc committee for special education to hear concerns and identify ways to improve communication, consistency, and community involvement. Much work occurred during the 2018-19 school year to address concerns in these areas and work is still underway.

Recommendation 4C: Retaliation – Develop a plan for addressing the fear of parents and actions of staff members in retaliating against parents and students for expressing concerns or dissatisfaction with programs, services, staff and/or the treatment of students with disabilities, or for contacting outside entities for advocacy or legal support.

The topic of retaliation was also discussed during the ad hoc committee for special education. Effort to build collaborative and trusting relations through improved communication has been a focus. Budget requests were submitted and approved to support a reorganization of the OSS to include two assistant directors. The assistant directors are responsible for the leadership, management, and supervision of the special education supervisors and are an additional layer of support should parents have concerns. Parents have an avenue for expressing concerns and all allegations of retaliation are thoroughly investigated by the OSS leadership and/or Human Resources and Talent Development as appropriate.

Recommendation 4D: Inclusive culture – Promote a district-wide inclusive culture in every LCPS school and provide tools for school-based staff to implement activities and programs that create an environment where individual differences are valued, embraced, and evidenced by:

- i. Increasing opportunities for cooperative and collaborative planning and teaching practices that integrate students with disabilities in the general education classroom setting and that model acceptance, active involvement and understanding towards students with differences.
- ii. Provide regular opportunities for peer supports in the classroom, buddy systems for lunch and school activities, and the active encouragement of students with disabilities’ participation in extracurricular activities.
- iii. Use evidence-based inclusive practices, such as the Stetson Inclusive Practices framework.
- iv. Set the expectation for a welcoming environment for students with disabilities at school events, before/after school activities, special school-based programs (i.e. chorus, drama, student council, planning committees, morning news show, etc.)
- v. Create a LCPS web page dedicated to sharing and promote examples of inclusive practices in action for adoption by other staff and schools.

- Disability Awareness
- Autism Awareness
- Inclusive awareness week
- Expectation that SEL curriculum will be delivered in the general education setting for all students.
- Inclusive Action Plans are now part of each school’s improvement plans
- Increase in Schools Unified Teams and activities
- Monitoring regularly the State Indicator Targets
- Meeting with schools to increase opportunities within the master schedule to provide inclusion for students with disabilities
- The school board strategic action on inclusivity and progress made in this area.

Recommendation 4E: Communication to parents regarding dyslexia initiatives– Improve transparency with parents of students with dyslexia by communicating more regularly to facilitate meaningful participation, and build trusting, positive working relationships. Specifically, families should be fully informed about the

Intervention Digital Implementation Guide currently used by 48 schools, which includes tier definitions for reading and instructional match guidance for choosing an appropriate intervention based on student need and an instructional matrix specific to students with dyslexia.

Open and transparent communication is welcomed and desired between LCPS and the dyslexia community. We initially had quarterly Dyslexia Stakeholders Meetings. Attendance unfortunately declined and as dyslexia efforts increased, it was recommended to move meetings to twice per year. Communication of meeting dates went to identified stakeholders. One parent member attended both meetings of the school year.

Additionally, the SIF-R Team hosted two events with PRS, had a presentation at the SEAC meeting and held a session requested through Decoding Dyslexia within the 2018-2019 school year. Two sessions are scheduled again this October with Parent Resources Services, and the SIF-R Team remains open to additional suggestions.

Recommendation 4F: Dyslexia SIF-Rs should be present in IEP meetings the first year. The “in training” specialized reading facilitator does not have the ability to set realistic goals based on a system they are not completely trained in. The goals should be implemented by the highly trained SIF-Rs the first year, with fidelity. Fully trained and

full accountability should be the expectation. It reduces time, cost in finding teacher subs for IEP meetings, and could reduce the high cost of an advocate recommending missed goals.

The SIF-R position has roles and responsibilities of coaching teachers, teams, conducting Data CLTs and Professional Learning. The SIF-R is not an identified member of the IEP team.

An intensive professional learning plan is provided in an ongoing basis for all SIF-R Team members, including on-boarding of new members.

Area of Need/Concern 5: Compliance

Issues related to the IEP, consistency across the school division, and the implementation of supports and services continue to impact the performance, inclusion, and achievement of students with disabilities.

Recommendation 5A: IEPs – Provide school-based administration and special education staff with clear expectations and regular training for staff who develop, monitor, report, and supervise IEPs to ensure that each IEP is unique to each student and meets legal and regulatory requirements. Hold staff accountable for IEP compliance as part of an annual special education performance review and as part of their formal performance evaluations.

The Office of Special Education developed a full day interactive professional development training related to the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia. This is a required training for all school-based Special Education designees. The training was offered to administrators during the 2017-2018 school year and expanded to teachers and administrators during the 2018-2019 school year. Prior to the roll out of the training for school-based staff, a 5-day training was provided to all special education supervisors, specialists, consulting teachers and coordinators.

A required training on Meeting Facilitation has been developed for all Special Education Administrative Designees. The Special Education Supervisors received the training prior to the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

There are annual training requirements for special education staff and Special Education Administrative Designees (FBA, BIP, Restraint and Seclusion, IEP writing process).

Pupil Services Problem Solving Team (PSSST) meetings, meetings with school admin, CLT meetings with sped staff held by supervisors

Recommendation 5B: IEP Implementation – Create new mechanism by which fidelity and consistency in implementing all IEP supports and services is monitored to ensure timely and competent delivery by the appropriate personnel.

- i. Establish a response system that reacts swiftly when supports and services have not been implemented per the IEP to minimize disruption to the student and lost opportunities to learn, access the appropriate curriculum, and participate in academic and school-wide activities.

- Every special education teacher participates in the special education academy as well as the school's designee.
- Supervisors are monitoring IEP's to ensure fidelity has been established.
- Continued efforts are being taken to provide leadership in this area. A budget request was submitted and accepted to provide an assistant director for procedural support and coordinator to provide additional oversight and professional learning in this area.

Recommendation 5C: Fidelity and frequency of specialized reading instruction, to include:

- iii. Service delivery outside of the regular school day would be a consideration of the IEP team as a provision of ESY services.
- i. Follow up classes to all teachers that are implementing OG in their classrooms, support on a regular basis, video database showing teachers how to introduce concepts that they can regularly view and use in their teaching,

These items are in place. Videos were developed at the end of last school year for roll out this fall. Implementation practice sessions are held and are ongoing.

- ii. Struggling students should get 1:3 ratio, with the MOST skilled instructor. This is the instructor who has the most training and has finished or is in the process of doing their practicum. Students should not be receiving intervention from assistant teachers UNLESS they are trained in the method of intervention.

Multiple instructional approaches to support struggling readers have been in place through the RTI process. Students may receive individualized support targeted support through small group interventions provided or guided by the teacher.

- iii. Partnerships with parents and students in the upper grades to have a "zero period" (before school starts) for more intensive intervention every day. To help a student bridge the gap there should be at least 2 hours of instruction and sometimes another 40-90 on top of that every day. "Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instructional time. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality of instruction in great quantity." Teacher quality x time = growth.

Parents are important partners in their student's educational program. School-based meetings should occur when a parent has a concern or interest in additional supports. Service delivery outside of the regular school day would be

a consideration of the IEP team as a provision of ESY services.

iv. Offering ESY with a qualified trained reading facilitator.

ESY services are provided by licensed special education teachers in accordance with the services outlined in the student's IEP. ESY receive additional training as deemed necessary to address individual student needs.

Recommendation 5D: Qualified dyslexia training support, to include:

- i. Teachers implementing interventions need more training and monitoring. Interventions being implemented are not being given enough time to work correctly. In addition, interventions are being "piecemealed" together which leads to fidelity and reliability issues. Remediation takes time and requires fidelity to program.

The SIF-R Team regularly coaches special education teachers implementing specialized reading and focuses instructional coaching on fidelity.

- ii. SIF-Rs should become certified in order to oversee the implementation of the OG program correctly and with fidelity.

SIF-Rs are highly skilled, trained and experienced in the delivery of OG instruction. This factor is highly considered in hiring and subsequent professional growth.

- iii. Allocate funds to hire more SIF-R to support schools. This would enable SIF-Rs to meet with teachers on a more regular basis. SIF-R are stretched out in too many schools. 10 people are not enough to oversee 92 schools in LCPS. There should be at a minimum monthly meet and greets, video updates, or other support to help these teachers.

The OSS specialized reading team works collaboratively with the department of instruction reading facilitators. Collaborative efforts are in place to utilize consulting teachers to expand support on instructional strategies. Ongoing training is provided to teaches to build capacity in specialized reading instruction. Consideration to expand specialized reading staff is an area under review of the FY21 budget.

- iv. Require follow-up sessions and monitoring over teachers implementing OG.**

The Orton-Gillingham refresher professional learning sessions were added as course offerings beginning in Spring 2019 and occur on an ongoing basis. Staff who have been trained in OG previously are able to attend these sessions which provide opportunity for practice, feedback and discussion. Video demonstrations have been developed and are being rolled out to trained staff this fall.

Recommendation 5E: Intervention with secondary dyslexic students – Secondary students need to be given more intense intervention without being penalized in their schedules. Offer a middle and high school Pilot program for a Zero Block, where students can receive the intense remediation needed to close the gap.

High school delivery models have focused on creating a remediation block and/or integrating needed interventions into basic skills courses, study hall/advisory. Personalized learning also offers great potential to integrate reading strategies into content, as appropriate.

Recommendation 5F: Dyslexia intervention should not be school based. Provide more consistency between schools, and parents more involved in evaluating whether benchmarks have been met.

Our goal is consistent training and implementation in all schools. All schools now have teams of teachers trained in specialized reading interventions.

- i. Using the school improvement plans, publicize whether or not 80% of students have met benchmarks and standards for each school for each grade.
- ii. Meet ESSA requirements specifying that LEA's develop and implement an evidence-based comprehensive support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes in identified schools in "*partnership with stakeholders (including principals, and other local leaders, teachers and parents.*"
- iii. Include all of the information for cut-scores, benchmarks, interventions, programs, RTI/MTSS models and RTI/MTSS manuals, including the Response to Intervention Digital Guide in publicly accessible formats to enable parents to meaningfully participate and engage in thoughtful and educated discussions. <http://myschoolmyvoice.nea.org/wp->

Recommendation 5G: Platforms for personalized learning and dyslexia – Increase use of Personalized learning platforms like Achieve 3000.

- i. Audio should be an example of what a student can use to access the curriculum on their level even though they cannot read on their own.

Emphasis on training and appropriate consideration of accessible instructional materials, including but not limited to AIM VA has increased emphasis. This is also supported through the SIF-Rs.

- ii. Provide access to grade level content and do not reduce the content based on the Lexile score. Schools are utilizing one data point to design curriculum across subjects. Child is given a Lexile score and classwork is produced from that score. Lexile levels are being determined without accommodations for children with dyslexia. Children with Dyslexia have a reading disability and in most cases do not need to have coursework modified.

Recommendation 5F: Dyslexia program fit – Determine if a reading intervention program is the appropriate fit for a student who has had previous reading remediation and regressed. Instead of quickly making changes to methods, examine other possible reasons for the student's regression. For instance, Is the program being implemented with fidelity? Is the group size appropriate? Is the intensity level correct? Is the teacher properly trained and implementing the program correctly?

The SIF-R Team recommends using a trend formed by 6-8 data points to inform decisions on changes/modifications to intervention. This guidance is in alignment with the LCPS MTSS-RTI manual.

Recommendation 5G: Follow ESSA for dyslexia - ESSA defines comprehensive reading instruction and what it should entail for a structured literacy approach (See Appendix 2). We continue to support this to provide FAPE for all students. As well as, looking at our current approach to Tier 1 instruction to show balanced literacy is not an appropriate method for our students to tackle language development.

LCPS also recommends a structured literacy approach be utilized for students with dyslexia. This is fully supported in all training offered in specialized reading, and all guidance documents.